Bulletin of Anomalous Experience

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⁂ Our Fifth Year! ⁂

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Mail

Renewal Comments

Thanks to all who renewed their subscription to BAE for 1994. While I consider every renewal a vote of confidence in this project, I particularly appreciate the notes of encouragement which are sometimes attached. Here are a few.

I want to express my appreciation of your very in-depth newsletter. Though I don't always find the time to finish them all, they are very well done. I feel the information is invaluable to the UFO community/medical professionals.
Michael Downey, MUFON State Director for Oregon

Every issue is better than the last.
Paul McCarthy

Congratulations on another year as editor of the most useful forum of debate in this crucial field — I know it's a lot of hard work for you, but we are all immensely grateful that you do it!
Your newsletter is truly a meeting place. Today I sent off a letter to Bartholomew apropos of your item, and received in turn a letter from David Ritchey suggesting we compare notes. Where else could one meet such a hand-picked selection of like-minded folk?
Hilary Evans

Just received and read the latest issue of the Bulletin... . It improves in every way with every issue. You are doing a very good job of covering an otherwise disreputable field.
Dennis Stillings

There is something decidedly stinky about much of ufology (this recent Clear Lake nonsense is just another example), but it's work like yours that keeps me sniffing around in it.
C. Sweet

BAE, like a fine Bordeaux, improves with age. I especially enjoyed this latest issue. Even the software review was helpful — my son had presented it to me for Chanukah — and fortunately my husband had not attempted to install it yet. So much for the illustrious Wendelle Stevens!
Looking forward to Vol. 5 No. 1!
Jennie Zeidman

Let me say I think you're doing a great job — balancing the absurd & sloppy with cautionary notes, and doing a host of book/article reviews from journals to which I have no access.
Joseph Long, Ph.D.

Just a short note to say keep up the good work. Yours is the only publication on the ET subject that has a high enough level of integrity for me to read it. I made 15 copies of your October issue and gave them out as gifts to interested folks here in the NYC area as well as people in England.

I hope in 1994 you will publish a wider array of writers beyond your (seemingly) regulars of Filip Coppens, Dennis Stacy and Richard Boylan (and a couple of others). Thank you for introducing me to Richard Thompson's wonderful "Alien Identities." It has been an important and meaningful link in my life due to his chapters on Vedic literature.
Lois Horowitz

I *really* liked the [latest issue of] BAE! ... I'm telling people it's the BEST ufozine anywhere. And I say that from an informed viewpoint, BTW. I received dozens of ufozines and circlezines from around the world, and BAE is clearly the most rational, scientific and informative of any. FSR, IUR and MUFON can't hold a candle to your issues! JUFOS is good, but BAE is more frequent, and more current than the case studies and historical research published in JUFOS. (My own article on the Michalak case is coming in the next JUFOS, incidentally.)
Chris Rutkowski - rutkows@cc.umanitoba.ca

Careless Citations

by David Hufford, Ph.D.

Below are segments of a letter David Hufford (author of the classic The Terror That Comes In The Night: An Experience-Centered Study of Supernatural Assault Traditions *-- see BAE Vol. 3 No. 5) was kind enough to send along. The original was written to a colleague as part of a discussion they were having about citations and bias in the literature about anomalies.*

This would also be a fine place to mention that sharing correspondence in this way is a simple, time-efficient way to contribute to the discussion in BAE.

The use of citations to support arguments or observations which they do not in fact support interests me in terms of unconventional topics (UFOs, ghost belief, NDEs, etc.). More generally I think of it as related to problems of cultural authority (by which I mean suspension of personal judgment when subjecting one's beliefs to the statements of experts) in scholarship and science. I more often think about the authority of academic experts vis-a-vis the public, but the impossibility for any one of us professor types of reading (or even understanding) all academic information relevant to our primary topics brings cultural authority into academic knowledge-making. When this happens the acceptance of cultural authority necessarily brings with it all of the issues of status, esthetics, and so on entailed by cultural authority in public discourse. The citation matter strikes me as a central element in this academic construction process.

I have long been aware that debunking articles and books consistently misuse the citation process to give the appearance of overwhelming data and consensus. Ronald Siegel, for example, in his frequently reprinted debunking

essay "The Psychology of the Afterlife" gives a great many citations of his own work which, on inspection, are irrelevant to the statements to which they are attached. On these topics I see a strong rhetorical motivation for the misuse of citation, and I am not convinced that it is entirely unintentional. At any rate, I am writing now because I have found two excellent instances of misrepresentation of cited work in which the erroneous redescription serves the general thrust of conventional notions about anomalous experience.

1) Spanos, Nicholas P., Cross, Patricia A., Dickson, Kirby, and DuBreuil, Susan C. "Close Encounters: An Examination of UFO Experiences." Journal of Abnormal Psychology Vol. 102 #4 (1993): 624-632.

Most of the findings are supportive for those of us who take the reports seriously, presenting evidence that contradicts most debunking theories of UFO belief and experience. Their division of UFO experience into intense and non-intense, with the former relating to abduction, is helpful. However, some of their interpretations reflect an obvious tacit acceptance of conventional views despite their own findings. My example begins with their use of sleep paralysis.

The authors use my book The Terror That Comes in the Night (U. Penn Pr., 1982) as their basic source on the subjective details of sleep paralysis. They do that quite well. But they sum up my findings in, the following words:

[P. 625] "The contents of the hallucinations appear to vary as a function of the sleeper's beliefs and expectations, and in individuals who believe in extraterrestrial visitation the hallucinations may take the form of space aliens (Hufford 1982)."

In fact my findings were the opposite, and most of the book was devoted to ruling out the conclusion that they state. Even if the authors had not actually read the book, in my Conclusion I offer 10 numbered assertions about which I am confident. At least the following two should contradict their statement: (3) "The pattern of the experience and its distribution appear independent of explicit cultural models." (p. 245) (10) "The contents of this experience cannot be satisfactorily explained on the basis of current knowledge." (p. 246) So even if they did actually bother to read the book, it is difficult to see how they could believe the statement that they associate with their citation of my book.

Their brief statement essentially reasserts what I call "the Cultural Source Hypothesis," a summary of the conventional view of anomalous experience as produced by prior learning and expectation -- 'belief produces confirmatory experience.' However, in their own work they are more cautious, refusing to interpret an association of UFO belief with intense experience as necessarily showing a causal connection between prior belief and experience. They state that

"The finding that most clearly differentiated the UFO groups from the comparison groups was the belief in UFOs and in the existence of alien life forms. The interpretation of this correlational finding is, however, ambiguous. On the one hand, it might mean that strong beliefs in alien life primed subjects to interpret ambiguous external stimuli or to generate imaginings in terms of these beliefs. Alternatively, these findings might indicate that experiences such as hallucinating a space alien while paralyzed in bed are likely to strengthen belief in alien life. (pp. 629-630)

But the hegemony of the Cultural Source view triumphs again when an article in the New York Times [Walter Sullivan, "Study Finds No Abnormality In Those Reporting U.F.O.'s (sic)" New York Times (Monday November 29, 1993):B7.], describing the Spanos et al. article, begins by saying that

"A study of 49 people who have reported encounters with unidentified flying objects, or U.F.O.'s, has found no tendency toward abnormality, apart from a previous belief that such visitations from beyond the earth do occur."

Never mind the fact that the author calls UFO belief "a tendency toward abnormality" while Gallup data has shown for years that the belief is held by a majority of Americans. The big problem here is that Sullivan reports the Spanos study as having shown an association between experience and "previous belief," which they not only did not find, but which they denied having evidence of. This is an exact replication of the error of Spanos et al. in asserting that I had shown an association between previous belief and UFO experience in sleep paralysis, which I not only did not find but had explicitly denied.

I always find bias interesting, because of its inherent role in knowledge-making. But it is consistent bias that follows generalized patterns that is most interesting from a scientific view. As frustrating as the errors are, they provide an eloquent confirmation of my claim that the Cultural Source Hypothesis constitutes a systematic bias that enters into the construction not only of interpretations of anomalous belief and experience, but into the construction of observation descriptions themselves. That is the most fundamental kind of distortion, and it has effects that are very difficult to combat.

One final point related to both the cultural authority issue in general and my example in particular: I am not clear on just when it became acceptable to cite consistently by reference to whole works rather than giving page numbers. The practice greatly loosens up the citation process and gives us inveterate checkers a much more difficult time in documenting fouls. For the neutral inquirer it renders such citations almost impossible to test. Cites without page numbers, especially to whole books, are basically a "take it or leave it" proposition.

[Some writings on the paranormal, especially by debunkers,] never mention experiences of real anomaly. Even when real anomalous experiences are presented they are interpreted in terms of data derived from successful tricks played by experimenters on college students. Zusne and Jones' Psychology of Anomalous Experience and the debunking of Singer and Benassi always proceeds this way. That seems like another example of systematic bias that essentially renders the interpretations of real anomalous experience offered by such authors entirely moot.

The "Sociology"of Mainstream Anomaly Research

by Robert J. Durant

The paper "Close Encounters: An Examination of UFO Experiences" reviewed in BAE Vol. 4, No. 6, illustrates what I call the "sociology" of mainstream research into anomalies. That paper literally begins and ends with the axiom that UFOs, and of course UFO abductions, are nonsense. See also the very revealing bibliography, in which only the skeptics are cited for the passages treating the nature of UFOs.

Similarly, on page 24 you summarize the paper "Redefining epidemic hysteria: an example from Sweden," where the researcher assumes *a priori* that the "ghost rockets" of Sweden reported in 1946 were a "collective delusion."

The New York Times carried a fairly long article on the "Close Encounters" paper written by their semi-retired science expert (and anti-UFO fanatic) Walter Sullivan. It appeared in the Monday edition, presumably so that it would not infect the Tuesday Science Times section, where it certainly would have been featured if the study had concluded that UFO experiencers are "nuts."

Boylan and Gotlib: A Dialogue

The following exchange continues the dialogue between Richard Boylan and myself that began last issue with questions I raised about his new book Close Extraterrestrial Encounters *(reviewed in Vol. 4 No. 5). The first letter is from myself to Dr. Boylan; I prepared it around the time I was working on last issue's editorial. Dr. Boylan's reply is addressed to the letter below and to the editorial. A brief reply from me ends the exchange for this issue.*

Readers are invited to participate in this discussion in future issues..

Dr. Boylan's book Close Extraterrestrial Encounters: Positive Experiences with Mysterious Visitors *(coedited with Lee K. Boylan) is available for $12.95 plus $2.00 S&H from Wild Flower Press, P.O. Box 230893, Tigard Oregon 97281 (1-800-366-0264).*

Dear Richard:

Thanks very much for taking the time and trouble to compose a very thoughtful response to my letter (and for the diskette version, which, as you know, is very helpful). I appreciate the exchange of ideas between the two of us, and also your participation in my ongoing attempt to create a dialogue in the pages of BAE. The new issue of BAE [Vol. 4 No. 6] contains my letter (or at least those parts that pose the questions) and your response. This issue also contains an essay I started working on shortly after I wrote you, which pertains to some of the issues we are discussing. I was unable to send you the essay earlier because I have been working on it right up to press time. I offer the following comments as a direct response to your letter, but please feel free to comment on both this letter and/or the essay as you feel appropriate (and as time and energy permit!).

First, I want to reaffirm some of my basic feelings about the CE-IV experience. I approach abduction and contact experiences with an open mind, willing to accept pretty much any explanation as long as I feel I have sufficient proof to support it. So far I have not found any single explanation to be convincing enough for me to feel personally and professionally comfortable defending it against a meeting of my peers, say a licensing board (an ever-present concern these days with our litigious society and the increasingly high profile of the FMS Foundation and its adherents).

Even though I am still unsure of the etiology of these experiences, one thing I *am* sure of is that there is at least a core group of these experiences which do not have conventional explanations, and cannot be dismissed as simply hallucinations, cryptomnesia, sleep disorders or temporal lobe epilepsy. And I *am* prepared to defend this position to a committee of my peers. The collection of evidence to support this assertion has been, to my mind, one of the most important achievements of Ufology over the last twenty years.

So, while in a particular case I might be able to say "This CE-IV case does not have a prosaic explanation," in answer to the question "Well, then, what is the explanation?" I feel at this time I must answer, "I don't know, but the client believes it to be _____, and a number of other individuals who have had similar experiences believe that, too." For me to say "The explanation *is* _____," I would require evidence which I don't think we have yet.

You note that the difference between depression and contact experiences is that depression is an "abridgement of conscousness" while contacts are "altering and expanding of consciousness, of which the experiencer is immediately and intimately aware." Assuming this is true of contact experiences, how much do we really understand about this state of expanded consciousness? For example, dreams are a different level of consciousness than the waking state, and we accept that some dream experiences may be best understood in terms of symbolism and metaphor. Shamanic journeying is another example. Do "power animals" really exist as such, or are they constructs of the psyche, or representations of an "other" intelligence that takes on a form consistent with the culture of the shaman, or something else again? And how about interpretation of hallucinogenic-induced experiences, which some people (like Terrence McKenna) tout as nature's own consciousness-expanding tool?

Using the concepts and tools of consensus reality to understand, explore and counsel for experiences in expanded consciousness may not always be valid. If experiences in the state of expanded consciousness are meant to be interpreted symbolically, metaphorically, or in still other ways, then counselling for the experience on another basis may be misdirected. So, to my mind suggesting that these experiences cause or occur in "expanded consciousness" begs the question of whether the client really does know best what happened to him/her. (I will grant that the client is in the best position to know that *something* happened).

This is why I think personal validation is of uncertain value in discerning the *meaning or interpretation* of the experience (not whether an experience occurred or not). The question is not "were they contacted or not?" but "What is the nature of what actually happened?" As you point out in your letter, we do not check with the client's place of employment to verify they were fired, or with their lover to confirm that they were unfaithful to their spouse. But the real issue in the therapist's office is not the event itself but the meaning of the event. If the client says "I was fired," we take him (or her) at his word. If the client says, "I was fired because the boss hates me," the therapist would likely not accept that interpretation at face value. Similarly, the issue with CE-IV experiences is not whether the client is lying or not, but whether the etiology and nature of the experience are substantially as they perceive it (and no more than how they perceive it).

About the CEES criteria: My concern is that DSM-III-R criteria specify internal states — ways of thinking, feeling, acting, and how well one observes, thinks and remembers. Your CEES criteria go beyond this to specify thinking, feeling or knowing a very specific experience or idea. By way of comparison, Lukoff's proposed DSM-IV diagnosis "Mystical Experience with Psychotic Features" (MEPF) *(see BAE 2(1), Jan 1991 or Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 1985, 17(2))* contains five criteria which pertain to the mystical component of the syndrome: Ecstatic mood, sense of newly-gained knowledge, perceptual alterations, delusions if present have themes related to mythology, and no perceptual disorganization. The details of the knowledge or the specific themes of the "delusions" are not part of the definition, though they may be part of the accompanying explanatory comments. A more general definition for CEES in the style of MEPF might be more likely to get into the next DSM, and that would enhance the credibility of the whole CE-IV counselling enterprise.

Your CEES definition may very well turn out to be necessary and sufficient. The point of my letter was not about the *validity* of the definition, but that mental health professionals will be unlikely to accept the definition regardless of its validity (especially if it requires them, directly or indirectly, to accept the reality of contact experiences).

Finally, even though we may agree to disagree on some issues, I think we're still on the same side, working to provide support to experiencers, working to understand more about the experience itself, and make a positive contribution to the world in which we live. The preceding comments are offered in that spirit.

Dr. Boyan's reply:

Dear David:

Now that the hectic holiday season has concluded, I now am formulating a response to the issues raised in your Editorial in the December BAE (Vol. 4, No.6), as well as your letter (of December 13, 1993).

In your editorial, you quote a passage from my book Close Extraterrestrial Encounters concerning the use of personal validation as a way of knowing the truthfulness of experiences around us: "It is a characteristic of any substantive message, that the truthfulness of it can be discerned by the inner resonance of the particular message with what we already know to be true."

You then go on to observe that subjective reality does not always accurately reflect external reality. You further observe that "in the more conventional areas of my therapeutic practice, I do not find personal validation to be a reliable indicator of the correct diagnosis or treatment approach".

I would agree with both your observations without seeing any contradiction with what I said. I think the problem here may be your taking my epistemological statement as implying a proof of objective reality. In my book, I am dealing primarily with the problem of insecure, timid, self-doubting, close extraterrestrial encounter experiencers. One of their primary concerns is "Am I crazy (for believing that I had an ET encounter)?" Thus, I see it as part of supportive and educative counseling to help the client affirm that their mind still works properly, and that their ET contact experience is not a special case where their normally well-functioning consciousness has suddenly gone beserk on them. (Of course, such effort to support the personal validation capability of a shaken experiencer presupposes that the psychotherapist/ debriefer has already made an assessment of the mental status and character of the person reporting extraterrestrial contact, and has concluded that there is no evidence for delusion, hallucination, organic brain syndrome, misperception, factitious disorder, sociopathy, chemical dependency, hoaxing, or character disorder, which would indicate that the experiencer's self-report should be challenged.) Once the experiencer gets a "clean bill of health" from the therapist, is it not appropriate to accept personal experience reports, particularly where there is little point for the experiencer to come into a mental health professional's office and make up such a bizarre, socially-unacceptable tale?

Supporting the personal-validation capability of an evidently truthful experiencer is not the same thing as claiming that such a person's personal validation constitutes objective scientific proof that their close ET encounter actually occurred. The Western scientific method has traditionally required external, phenomenological, measurable evidence as proof. Such requirement presents an unusual challenge to the behavioral and social sciences, where human behavior, and the meaning assigned to behavior, are the phenomenological data being examined to prove hypotheses. The behavioral and social sciences have resolved this challenge by using large sets of people (and their behaviors) to create measurable statistics, (averages, trends, outliers, etc.). By examining such large sets of behavioral data, behavioral scientists measure whether a given phenomenon is likely to occur, and whether a specific trend is unexpected, and thus points to the influence of a special factor as causative.

In my research (inductive) with close encounter experiencers, I have aggregated data and statistics for a large sample of such persons, and looked for patterns, variability, and unusual cases. While no one (or two) cases, subjectively reported, constitute scientific proof (according to the canons of Western empirical science), large sample data from multiple cases, independently reported, and

clinically screened for mental disorder effects, tend to constitute the kind of proof (in this matter) that is accepted in behavioral science studies. I submit that such proof would support a conclusion, for example, that it is statistically highly improbable that this many mentally sound persons, not knowing each other nor conspiring nor well-informed about the CE-4 literature, would independently come up with such strikingly similar well-detailed accounts of highly anomalous experiences (concerning extraterrestrial contacts) which are socially taboo to admit to.

I hope that the above rather prolix argument has clarified that I do not intend to confuse the epistemological faculty of a mentally sound person's knowing what they know, with the kind of scientific proof needed to help establish that an objective phenomenological experience has taken place.

As to your point that a psychotherapy patient is not necessarily in the best position to know their own diagnosis or treatment, your example presupposes that the patient is disabled (by their mental/emotional disorder) from having sound discernment about their own status and needs. This certainly is true for many patients. However, as should be clear from what I have outlined above, close encounter experiencers are not usually mentally/ emotionally disabled persons, and thus there is not a mental disability disqualifying them from presumably sound use of their own personal-validation epistemological faculties. Generally, to compare close encounter experiencers with psychotherapy patients is to compare apples and oranges.

Next, I must take <u>strong</u> exception to your assertion that my "model" of the close ET encounter experience causes me to ignore the reports of experiencers reporting psychological trauma after a close encounter, and to "reinterpret" them according to my "model". I do not engage in dishonest science.

When I began my research, I had a hypothesis which was the opposite of what I have come to conclude after examining 114 cases so far. The general picture I now operate from was revised over time based on the sheer weight of many, many cases, which showed me that the Post-traumatic Stress model did not fit the data. Rather, statistical data showed me that the general pattern was of benign experiences, or of initial anxiety, rapidly resolved, except in cases where pre-existing, untreated, human-caused trauma caused abreactive flare-up of old traumatic wounds. Further data showed me that other causes of trauma in CE-4 experiencers were their experience of being previously debriefed by an investigator who inculcated an expectation of traumatic "abduction", or that the person reporting an "alien abduction" had actually been kidnapped and asasaulted by special operations military personnel accompanied by figures which the abductee was supposed to think were "aliens". These outlier cases with exceptional factors were invariably traumatic, whereas the cases without these factors were almost always nontraumatic. I did not start out with these suppositions; the case data imposed these factors on my consciousness, and compelled me to notice their effect on variability of emotional outcome.

In your letter to me, you cited my observation that a difference between mental disorders (like depression) and close-ET-encounter experiences is that depression (for example) causes an "abridgement of consciousness", whereas CE-4 experiences cause an "altering and expanding of consciousness". You ask: "Assuming this is true, how much do we really understand about this state of expanded consciousness?" Let me make more precise the term "expanded consciousness". By expanded consciousness I do not mean to imply organic or neurological change, such as occurs with LSD ingestion. Nor do I suggest that the expanded consciousness which frequently follows close encounters is any trance-like or religio-mystical state such as shamans sometimes operate in. Rather, the expanded consciousness of many close-encounter experiencers takes place in ordinary consciousness state, but with new and revolutionized boundaries and norms for what constitutes reality from then on.

There are precedents for such massive social consciousness expansion incidents, albeit more modest than the expansion occasioned by the human race's, one-by-one, coming to realize that we are not alone in the universe, or even on this planet. Earlier precedents include those who first heard Columbus tell that there is a New World to the west of Europe, or when Magellan came back to report that the world is not flat but round. Or when Galileo demonstrated that the sun does not revolve around the Earth.

Thus, I hope I have made it clear that I am <u>not</u> proposing that CE-4 experiencers had their experiences in an <u>altered</u> state of consciousness. In all the cases I have studied, the experiencer was operating in ordinary consciousness. The experiencers' expansion of consciousness happened after their experience, after getting over the shock of it, when the experiencer began to assimilate the implications of what the ET contact experience means for reality from then on.

You then go on to raise the issue of the <u>meaning</u> or <u>interpretation</u> of the CE-4 experience, and whether the experiencer is in the best position to interpret <u>the meaning</u> of what happened to him/her. Here we deal with the realms of the subjective and the objective. It is respectful of human individuality to listen sensitively to the interpretation that an experiencer places on his/her experience. On the other hand, a psychological professional well versed in the close encounter phenomenon obviously can be a very helpful resource to an experiencer who lacks such background, and is groping to understand what has just happened to him/her. I cannot categorically state that each experiencer's subjective interpretation of their experience is the most correct understanding that can be placed on that experience. Nor will I assert that experiencers in every case are not equipped to interpret their CE-4 experiences properly. In my clinical and research experience, CE-4 experiencers are generally sound, well-balanced, common-sensical persons, who want to utilize their own analytical powers as much as possible, but also appreciate the information and perspective that an experienced counselor can bring to the task of making sense of the experience.

In your next point, you raise concern that the criteria I propose for describing "Close Extraterrestrial Encounter Syndrome", (as a transient, mild variant of DSM-III-R Adjustment Disorder), involve criteria which are <u>highly specific</u> to the circumstances of a close extraterrestrial contact. I do not see a problem here. For example, in the DSM-II-R description of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, (PTSD), examples of highly unusual circumstances which

can precipitate the disorder include the extremely dangerous, extremely ambiguous, and (for many) existentially absurd circumstances that Viet-Nam soldiers in-country found themselves immersed in. Yet, apparently few soldiers involved in Operation Desert Storm, or the invasions of Panama or Grenada, experienced PTSD, because, while the circumstance of danger of death was present, the special blend of circumstances so prevalent in Viet-Nam was absent.

Further, you blanch at my proposed DSM-III-R criteria, because they may require mental health professionals "directly or indirectly to accept the reality of contact experiences". Since when is the task of facing the truth a good argument against accepting a new idea? We need only reflect on how the mental health community over the years balked and argued before finally accepting the reality of alcoholism as a mental disorder, or incest as a widespread trauma of childhood, or Satanic ritual abuse as an occasional but devastating reality in the lives of an unfortunate few. The volume of clinical and popular literature by professionals on extraterrestrial contact is sufficient now, in my opinion, that any fair-minded clinician who read it all with an open mind would have to consider carefully the reality of widespread extraterrestrial encounters with humans. The fact that many clinicians are not acquainted with this literature, or are standing pat with the ill-informed "conventional wisdom" that UFO believers are a bit daft, does not constitute a good reason why the special emotional and psychological challenges faced by CE-4 experiencers should not be carefully delineated in a highly-specific clinical description, (such as "Close Extraterrestrial Encounter Syndrome".)

Pioneers in any field have to face resistance, rebuffs, and sometimes worse. What else is new?

Let's hope the readers of BAE have not grown tired of this dialogue on the complications attendant on trying to understand the close extraterrestrial encounter phenomenon. It is in all our interests to get as clear as we can on what is happening to us all.

Here is my reply to Dr. Boylan's letter:

Thank you very much for your response. I appreciate the clarification of your position on the issues we have been discussing.

At this point I would like to invite readers to comment on the dialogue we have started over the last three issues. (BAE is, as I never tire of reminding people, a forum for discussion and debate among all readers. An actively participating subscriber is our best customer).

I would like to address one point you made in your letter above. My essay in BAE 4(6) was most definitely not accusing you (or Dr. Jacobs, the other example I mention) of "dishonest science." Neither was I accusing you of ignoring reports of psychological trauma — in fact, I included your definition of Complicated CE-IV, "an apparent extraterrestrial encounter associated with extreme and persistent disabling psychological trauma," as one of the excerpts in BAE 4(4) from your book Close Extraterrestrial Encounters.

I bristle a bit (quite a bit, actually) at your use of the term "dishonest." Your honesty, sincerity and integrity, or those of Dr. Jacobs (or his colleague Budd Hopkins, for that matter), are not being questioned, nor are they at issue here. I appreciate that your view of the CE-IV experience was arrived at after a great deal of clinical experience, and I am not challenging the experiences or the individual interpretations of same that you present in such a compelling manner in your book.

My point, perhaps made somewhat artlessly, was that your Complicated CE-IV definition leaves no room for "extreme and persistent disabling psychological trauma" being due to an individual's appropriate reaction to the CE-IV experience itself. If I read your book correctly, an individual who recalls traumatic CE-IV experiences, who has symptoms consistent with psychological trauma, and who believes with an "inner resonance" that their symptoms are caused by the trauma, is nonetheless mistaken. And this was exactly my point in the essay: "When an experience that is recalled with an abductee's personal sense of rightness diverges from the researcher's model, the model tends to wins out over personal validation."

Readers — it's your turn!

Reply to Hilary Evans' "From Untruth to Unreality"

by Dennis Stacy
Dennis Stacy is editor of MUFON UFO Journal

Hilary Evans's comments, "From Untruth to Unreality" *(BAE,* Vol. 4, No. 6), have implications beyond the mere interview stage, as highlighted in the same issue by an excerpt from Robert Lindner's now classic, The Fifty-Minute Hour. These have not only to do with the nature of physical evidence itself, but with the previous proclivities or mind-set often brought to bear on any anomalous experience by the ertswhile investigator of same.

In other words, one can not only be fooled by others, but it's also patently possible to fool one's self. Another sterling example of same can be found in the *Journal of Scientific Exploration,* Vol. 7, No. 2, 1993, in an article by Dr. Irwin Wieder which examines the rather infamous Willamette Pass, Oregon, "UFO" photograph of November 1966. Courageously, the author admits that the photograph was almost certainly an inadvertent hoax, and, more importantly, that he allowed himself to be originally taken in by his own "belief mode."

The problem was complicated at the outset because the witness/photographer appeared to have impeccable credentials: he had a Ph. D. in biochemistry, had served honorably as a Navy officer during WWII, and was then employed as a consultant with a major logging company. According to the UFO investigator he first approached, the percipient was "distinguished looking." Of equal import, he desired no publicity and insisted on remaining anonymous.

Yet Wieder convincingly demonstrates that the Willamette "UFO" was nothing more than a roadside sign photographed from a moving car. In repeated personal interviews,

however, the "impeccable" eyewitness continued to insist that he had seen a dome-shaped object move away at extremely high speeds. "For whatever reason[s]," Wieder concludes, "once he started down this path he never wavered."

There's an old adage that applies here. Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. To his credit, Wieder wasn't fooled twice. A summary of the case can be found in the January 1993 issue of the *MUFON UFO Journal.*

Dennis Stacy

P.S. I seem to remember reading, somewhere that Lindner's "Kirk" was in reality the sci-fi writer "Cordwainer Smith," a pseudonym, if memory serves, for the late Paul Lindbarger (sp?), who was, by then, some sort of UN diplomat, representative or other official. You can include this if you think it might lead to any further confirmation.

Can BAE readers shed any light on this question?

On "Sensed Presences" and other matters

by Filip Coppens
Dendermondse Steenweg 56, 9100 Sint-Niklaas, BELGIUM

In Bulletin of Anomalous Experience Vol. 4, No. 6, p. 19, you announced the results of a study on "sensed presences," like feeling an alien is watching you. However, this study did apparently not use people falling in the abovementioned category. The conclusions were that stress is not an important factor.

Once again it seems stress is not an important factor in these manifestations. Previously, many believed this was also the case in UFO abductions. I now wonder whether stress has anything to do with the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Researchers like Zindars-Schwarz still claim the BVM are seen by stressed people ("particularly women who are divided between family-loyalties and work"), but I now have even stronger doubts about these claims than before.

The study believed this sensed presence was associated with successful coping. "The sensed presence should be added to, and therefore extends, the recognized range of normal coping behaviors in certain unusual situations." This brings to mind people who claim to see the ghost of their departed father, a mother or whomever just after that person has died. An alternative explanation could be that the ghost really is there and hopes that his presence will be felt and will thus help in getting over the loss.

I wonder whether such things as Men-In-Black and the belief that aliens are monitoring abductees (with or without the use of implants) can't be classified under the general heading of "sensed presence." And should thus be classified as "evidence" "they" exist. In plain terms: people have these nightmares, hallucinations or genuine UFO-abductions and the presence of MIB, phantom helicopters and the belief the aliens are watching them is a part of the coping-mechanism of this person, who is trying to cope with his nightmare, hallucination or genuine UFO-abduction. I believe the parallel with the "sensed presence" is obvious.

In the same issue, a study was featured on how early childhood abuse may influence the development of the limbic system, a part of our brain that is particularly involved with the perception of the outside world and how this information is stored in our mind. The stress could also affect the development of the prefrontal cortex, possibly resulting in precocious maturation but also possibly premature arrest of its development.

I like to stress that people with paranormal experiences tend to be more introverted, also showing higher levels of being fantasy-prone. At the same time, it seems physically and sexually abused children tend to be more fantasy prone.

It is also interesting that left-handed people, whose "center" is on the right-frontal hemisphere and not the left-frontal hemisphere quite often fall in this "other-normal" category. So "paranormal encounters" might very well have something to do with the (pre-)frontal cortex and the differences between left- and right-hemisphere. I do believe the brain functions as one operating system (as opposed to the hemispherical approach, in which one hemisphere more or less clashes with the other one), but do think that [for] people who have paranormal experiences, the hardware (the brain) is arranged slightly differently, possibly because of the different working of the limbic system, which acts as some sort of conduit towards the cortex. In plain terms: the brain of people with paranormal experience might function differently from the rest of us, possibly due to events occurring in childhood.

Also interesting to note is the Sylvian (right hemisphere) fissure, which seems to play a role in the near-death experience (cfr. Melvin Morse's Closer to the Light). Could it be that when the limbic system functions in another mode, a different kind of reality is seen? Or is the same reality seen in a different way? The former would tend to stress the existence of "higher planes", possibly the existence of genuine abductors. What the latter would mean is beyond my grasp. But I feel both questions could lead to most interesting answers.

I thank David Gotlib for his continuing efforts to publish excerpts from the medical literature in BAE.

Networking

Dr. Alexander Imich Prize Contests No. 6 and 7

Number 6 - Are All Crop Circles Merely Hoaxes?

Dr. Alexander Imich announces his call for papers and contest No. 6, sponsored by the Center for Frontier Sciences at The Temple University, Dr. Beverly Rubik, Director. A $1,000 prize will be awarded for the best original paper on the topic: Are All Crop Circles Merely Hoaxes?

Any author may submit a paper for consideration. The winning entry will be published in the Center's periodical Frontier Perspectives. All other entries will remain the property of their authors who will be free to publish them upon completion of the contest. The deadline for submission is June 30, 1994.

Papers should be written in English and be double-spaced on one side of a sheet of 8½" x11" or A4 paper with minimum one inch margins on all sides. Three copies of each entry should be sent to:

W.P. LaParl
Contest Coordinator
19 Wood Street
Hopkinton, MA 01748-1132

Number 7 - Exceptional Human Experiences

$1,000 in prize money will be awarded the winner of Dr. Alexander Imich's seventh essay contest, which is on Exceptional Human Experiences (EHEs).

Religious ecstasy, Marian visions and other apparitions; feelings of unity with another or with the universe, nature, or humanity; near-death experiences (NDEs); out of-body experiences (OBEs); awareness of events distant in space or time; knowledge of the thoughts or inner conditions of others; falling in love; creative inspiration; kundalini experience; exceptional performance surpassing normal capacities in art, sport, or everyday life; hauntings, poltergeists, and encounters with UFOs, crop circles, and other anomalies; all are types of exceptional human experience.

Some EHEs have positive, some negative, and some no evident aftereffects. Contestants are asked to recall all their EHEs and to describe how their lives were, or were not, influenced by them. Entries not exceeding 25 pages should be sent in triplicate, not later than December 31, 1994, to:

PSI Center
2 Plane Tree Lane
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Conference Notice: Treat VI

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from their brochure:
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A special session on the extraordinary hospital-based, state-licensed, and state-trained psychic diagnosticians in Russia provides a unique aspect to TREAT VI. In addition, TREAT's world-wide activities in Experienced Anomalous Trauma (including a special hospital devoted to anomalous trauma in Russia and University-based research here in the U.S.) will be put in context with the work of clinicians and researchers from around the world.

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Lyn Buchanan, U.S. Army Intelligence Specialist (Ret.).

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S.P.A.C.E. Newsletter

c/o Harold Egeln,Jr., 9115 Colonial Road, Apt. 1B
Brooklyn, New York 11209-6154
Subscriptions: One year $15, Two years $25. Make check or money order payable to "Harold Egeln, Jr."

from the newsletter
S.P.A.C.E. (the Support Program for Abductees' Contact Encounters) was founded in New York City in March 1992. The support and research group gives UFO-experiencers a chance to share openly in a comfortable social setting, and explore experiences on the unknown frontier of close encounters. This interactive and proactive program tries to help by providing understanding; caring support; non-judgemental, meaningful feedback unencumbered by belief systems; and professional resources. In our search for truth, we hope to encourage experiencers towards real empowerment by overcoming fears; creating new life skills; nurturing transformation; and, for those who wish, initiating proactive interaction with the Unknown.
S.P.A.C.E. holds monthly gatherings, by invitation only to protect experiencers' privacy. The S.P.A.C.E. Newsletter, published monthly and written by experiencers, is available to group members and the public.

The UFO Directory

This publication contains listing of individuals, groups, organizations and publications related to the UFO field. The publisher welcome inquiries from any individual or group who would like to be listed in future editions.

- 66 pages, 8.5" x 11",plastic spiral-bound, biannual publication
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NUFOC-FLASH!

National UFO Center - Belgium
Tiensesteenweg 78/401, B-3800 Sint-Truiden, Belgium
No fee is listed for this newsletter; exchanges with other publications are welcome.

This newsletter describes itself as "an irregular publication of NUFOC-BELGIUM, a Flemish organization founded in January 1990 with its goal the investigation of the UFO phenomenon in a serious and critical manner. The first issue (8 pages) contains a critical review of Steven Greer's recent visit to Belgium and his statements about the Belgian UFO flap, and editor Paul Vanbrabant' own ideas about that flap, based in part on his visit to a Belgian air traffic controller station.

Upcoming Talk at Dissociation Conference

I have been invited to speak about the UFO abduction experience at the International Society for the Study of Multiple Personality & Dissociation (ISSMP&D)'s Fourth Annual Spring Conference, May 5-7, 1994, in Vancouver BC. I will be presenting an overview of my clinical experience working with abductees, possible connections between abduction experiences and dissociative disorders, the use of hypnosis, and a discussion of ethical issues.

I am bringing this up in BAE because the program for this meeting, which is currently being distributed, contains a typographical error in the title of my talk. The program reads, "The UFO Abduction: A Dissociative Experience." The program should read, "The UFO Abduction: A Dissociative Experience?" — a significant difference.

Contribution and Subscription Information

Bulletin of Anomalous Experience is a networking newsletter about the UFO abduction phenomenon and related issues, for mental health professionals and interested scientists.

BAE is a forum for presentation of ideas and information, and debate of same. Comment on anything you see here, brief or lengthy, are encouraged. So are opinion pieces, and notices of books, articles or journals you think are relevant to this field. Participate!

Our editorial policy was best described by Hilary Evans, who said we try to "comfortably tread the narrow path between the groves of academia and the dust and heat of the marketplace, inquiring and suggesting, not asserting or insisting." We publish most anything, whether we agree with it or not, as long as it's on topic.

Material for publication in computer-readable format is especially welcome . I can accept 3.5" or 5.25" diskettes. I run Word for Windows 2.0, but you can also send files in ASCII format. (Macintosh users: I don't have a Mac-to-PC conversion program, so please send files that are readable on an IBM system). If you are online, you can also e-mail material to me at my Internet address (on the WELL): drdave@well.sf.ca.us.

Subscriptions are $25 per calendar year (6 bimonthly issues); back issues are also available at $25 per calendar year. Remit in U.S. funds for U.S. and foreign orders, and Canadian funds for Canadian orders. Make cheques or money orders payable to "David Gotlib, M.D.", *not* to BAE.

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Features

False Memory Syndrome Update

Psychiatric Community Response to FMS

1. The Psychiatric Times of January 1994 carried a number of letters in response to opinion pieces both for and against the False Memory Syndrome idea. An excerpt from one letter appears below. Note once again the dismissive reference to alien abductions:

In "The False Memory Syndrome Furor" (PT November 1993), Sandra Prager, M.D., sees the False Memory Syndrome Foundation as an attack on her patients rather than an attempt to bring some sense of reality to the current, ever-growing epidemic. She is correct in recognizing that she too has become a crusader, gone forth to do battle against the infidels who question the authenticity of these "recovered memories." And she will find that as a crusader she will get many converts, the patients will satisfy her interests, and thus she will get much more "evidence" of sexual molestation at 9 months of age or even earlier. She will be flooded with the stories of participating in satanic cult sacrificial murders and abduction by aliens who wiped out the memories by fifth-dimensional means. The history of psychiatry is replete with accounts of such fads. It does become a challenge for the therapist to be able to listen with the "third ear" or read between the lines to understand what is going on between patient and therapist.... The therapist is not helpful if fused with the patient, taking on the beliefs and not recognizing the metaphors that are involved. I believe that damage is done to the patient, to the therapist and to the profession if this phenomenon is not subject to full examination.
Leo H. Berman, M.D. Westport, Conn.
(Dr. Berman is a psychiatrist in private practice and medical director of the outpatient department of the Bridgeport (Conn.) Mental Health Clinic.)

2. The following is from a commentary in the Los Angeles Times (Dec 3/93) by Richard J. Metzner, MD, of UCLA Dept. of Psychiatry, titled "A Legitimate Therapy Suffers Rip-Offs" ...

"Recovered memory therapy" is a marketing consultant's dream. It's timely, catchy and result- oriented. It taps into a large audience of people whose awareness of sexual abuse has been raised by the media. It sells a tantalizing product (recovered memories) that supposedly can cure nearly everything. It is quick and "cost-effective." And, it can create artificial memories that are nearly indistinguishable from real ones. This would be a merchandising paradise if the "units" being modified for profit weren't the minds of human beings.

What can we do about this situation? Here are some recommendations:

- If you think you may have been sexually abused but aren't sure, seek out an experienced psychotherapist who is recommended by someone you trust, such as a family doctor, a friend or, at the least, the referral service of your local psychiatric or psychological society. Never put yourself in the hands of a self-described "recovered memory therapist."
- If you are in therapy and are feeling pressured to believe that you were sexually abused, discuss your concerns with the therapist; if the pressure continues, report the experience to the therapist's professional association or society. Look for another therapist who has an open mind and an open heart, someone who will let you know when you're not operating in your own best interest.
- If you are a mental-health professional, reassess the work you are doing to make certain that you are not contributing to the problem by operating under the assumption (or business strategy) that a single cause, such as sexual abuse, explains most of the problems you see. Avoid using any techniques that can foster false memories unless you are well-trained and experienced in protecting patients from that complication and are certain that you have no preconceived biases about the memories you are eliciting.

...Many people can have their lives turned around in a positive way by psychotherapy, but it won't happen if they are coerced economically into seeking short-cut methods that promote premature diagnosis and inept, possibly dangerous, forms of intervention.

The Retractor Newsletter

I mentioned this newsletter for individuals who have disavowed their "recovered memories" of childhood sexual abuse in the last issue. The Retractor includes personal statements by retractors, short columns on psychotherapy and issues related to the FMS issue (like mind control and cult behavior), and interviews with authors and mental health professionals. I found the tone a little less strident than the FMSF newsletter, and I managed to find useful information in each issue. The personal stories are quite powerful. (UFO abductions are not mentioned at all in the issues I looked at. Are there any UFO abduction "retractors?") The Retractor is highly recommended for anyone working with "repressed memories."

Subscriptions are $12 for 4 issues (no charge if you are a retractor or a mental health professional). Write P.O. Box 5012, Reno NV 89513.

"I had another cult experience [with Recovered Memory Therapy]" Shawna recently told the Retractor. "At my age, I thought I knew better. At 17, I belonged to a Bible-based faith healer's cult, at 24, I faithfully practiced Transcendental Meditation, at 29, I had a brief fascination with a female "Channeler" and at 35, I now regard my 4 year Recovered Memory Therapy experience as the most destructive experience of all."

"Each time, I had my reality redefined by someone else. Each time, the same vulnerabilities arose that caused me to respond to the allure of new ideals. I was fair game because, on one level, I couldn't face the difficulties and

pain of everyday life. I was duped over and over because I never learned about the mechanics of mind control. I understand it now — I will not repeat my mistakes again."

"The reason why the sexual abuse obsession was so destructive was because it brought so much more harm to others with my accusations. I have had more guilt to deal with this time, more shame, than my other cult-like experiences carried. I accused my father, but my mother suffered and my sisters suffered, my friends suffered. I feel like I will never be able to make enough amends, but this time I am stronger because I made it a point to learn what happened to me and why I was vulnerable to manipulation and suggestions from my therapist. I think knowledge and understanding can be very self-protective skills, in addition to sharing with sympathetic others about all the pain and confusion and all the "memories."

Comments by the editor
"Many of us, at some point in our lives, had a cult or cult-like experience in the past. We often share the same vulnerabilities of high idealism, dependency weakness, basic resistance to change, spiritual hunger. A cult experience offers us a tempting escape from the hostile pain of the real world, a black and white answer, a righteous us-against-them stance. There was a desperate inner structure to be gained from our idealistic battle against perceived 'perpetrators' and 'abusers.' "

...
[from another issue]
Whatever inner vulnerabilities we had, it cannot detract from the fact that good therapy is not supposed to be a cult experience and people who undergo psychotherapy are not supposed to come out with the same psychological problems that ex-cult members have. In truth, we are now suffering from post-cult trauma and will continue to be vulnerable to being duped again unless we understand how and why it all happened. Our therapists are to be held fully accountable. It is the sacred oath of their profession to, "**First, Do No Harm**."

> The mind likes strange ideas as little as the body likes a strange protein and resists it with similar energy....[A] new idea is the most quickly acting antigen known to science. If we watch ourselves honestly, we shall find that we have begun to argue against a new idea even before it has been completely stated.
>
> *Wilfred Trotter, quoted byArthur Koestler in The Act of Creation*

The Fantasy-Prone Personality Hypothesis: Current Status

by Keith Basterfield
The author may be contacted at GPO Box 1894, Adelaide, South Australia 5001.

Introduction
The Fantasy-Prone Personality (FPP) hypothesis, as a possible explanation for alien abduction accounts, was first proposed by Robert E. Bartholomew, and myself, in 1988. The hypothesis is a falsifiable, testable one and has generated much debate since then. However, of late, some inaccurate statements have been made in some quarters about the hypothesis, and even about the FPP itself. It therefore appears timely to review the current status of the debate.

Discovery
From the outset it should be stated that the FPP itself is a finding of main stream psychology. By the way, I consider the words "fantasy-prone" to be a poor choice, and would prefer the more neutral "imagery-prone."

In the early 1980's, two American psychologists, Sheryl C. Wilson, and Theodore X. Barber, stumbled over a new type of personality which they came to call, the fantasy-prone personality (Wilson & Barber 1981, 1982, 1983.)

Amongst their findings from a group of women who rated as excellent hypnotic subjects were:

1. 60% of FPP subjects reported they had a false pregnancy at least once. They believed they were pregnant, and typical symptoms of pregnancy occurred. Two even went for abortions, following which they were told that no fetus had been found. In the control group 16% of the women experienced false pregnancies but no "missing fetus."

2. With their eyes open, 65% of the FPP subjects experienced their imagery "as real as real" in all sense modes. The other 35% found most sense modes "as real as real."

3. The fantasies had a life of their own, they were not directed or controlled by the subject.

4. 75% of FPP subjects could achieve sexual orgasm by mental fantasy alone.

5. As children, the FPP subjects lived in a make-believe world of their own construction.

6. When they were children, almost all the subjects believed in fairies, leprechauns, elves, and other such beings.

7. 58% of the FPP subjects, as opposed to 8% of the control group, had childhood imaginary companions whom they described as "real" to them.

8. Most FPP subjects had an incredible memory recall for childhood events, beyond that of most people.

9. 92% of the FPP subjects saw themselves a psychic and

reported numerous telepathic and precognitive experiences, compared to 16% of the control sample.

10. 88% of the FPP subjects, as compared to 8% of the control, reported out-of-body experiences.

11. 50% of the FPP subjects, as opposed to 8% of the controls, reported an ability to perform automatic writing.

12. 66% of the FPP subjects reported a perceived ability to perform healings, which none of the control group did.

13. 73% of the FPP subjects, as compared to 16% of controls, reported experiencing apparitions.

14. On the question of hypnagogic imagery, upon falling asleep, 64% FPP subjects, compared to 8% controls, reported frequent imagery as they fell asleep.

It should be noted here, that all the FPP subjects were socially aware, happy, normal, healthy individuals, free of psychopathology. They were all excellent hypnotic subjects.

Since then, other psychologists have extended this work and confirmed that about 4% of the general American population fits into this personality type, which is not detectable on standard psychological tests. (Lynn & Rhue 1986,1987,1988; Myers & Austrin 1985; Rhue & Lynn 1987a,1987b,1989.)

Bartholomew and Basterfield
Having come across the research of Wilson and Barber, I mentioned the relevance of it as regards abduction research, as I saw it, to Robert E. Bartholomew, an American Ph.D. student in Sociology, at Flinders University in my home town of Adelaide, South Australia. Bob and I had corresponded previously about hypnagogic and hypnopompic imagery.

We saw that:

- Many abductees who had undergone regression hypnosis were rated as "excellent" hypnotic subjects by the person performing the hypnosis. This fact is itself interesting, in that only a small percentage of the general population are in fact "excellent" subjects.
- Female abductees were reporting pregnancies and then "missing fetuses." This unusual claim closely matched the experience of two FPP subjects.
- If abductions were internally generated FPP imagery then they could appear "as real as real."
- My own research revealed that local abductees were reporting having above average memory recall for very early childhood events.
- Many abductees reported that they were either psychic prior to the abductees, or that their psychic experiences blossomed after the abduction.

We therefore felt that there were enough parallels between the FPP and abductions to warrant further research. However, it became evident to us that UFO researchers had not gathered sufficiently in-depth data about abductees to test the hypothesis that abductees would rate higher on psychological instruments measuring fantasy-proneness, than the average population.

It surprised us that some abduction researchers possessed pools of hundreds of cases but had carried out little to no scientific work on the psychology of abductions.

So, we decided on another approach. We examined the biographical details of 152 individuals who had been classified as either a contactee or an abductee. We found these subjects to be remarkably devoid of any psychopathology. However, in 132 cases, one or more major characteristics of FPP were noted. This lead us to propose that a closer examination be undertaken of a sample of abductees (Bartholomew et al 1991.)

This suggestion met with a range of responses. These ranged from agreement that here, for the first time, was a testable, falsifiable, scientific hypothesis; to outright rejection. Interestingly, the rejection came from researchers without them carrying out any actual testing. Fortunately, some individuals did decide to undertake a scientific analysis of the hypothesis.

Testing
The first was undertaken by US psychologists Kenneth Ring and Christopher Rosing of the Psychology Department of the University of Connecticut.

264 individuals, a mix of UFO encounterers, near-death experiencers, and controls engaged in a mail questionnaire survey. 97 UFO encounterers, 39 persons interested in UFOs but having no significant UFO experience, 74 persons who had undergone a near-death experience, and 54 persons interested in near-death experiences, were sampled.

Quoting from the report:

"Results showed that persons reporting abductions were psychologically indistinguishable from those who had other types of UFO encounters. However, UFO experiencers in general, while not more fantasy-prone than their controls, reported more sensitivity to non-ordinary realities as children as well as a higher incidence of child abuse and traumas than controls." (Ring & Rosing 1990:59).

The FPP hypothesis, that UFO experiencers, including abductees, would tend to be more fantasy-prone than controls was not born out in this study.

The second study, undertaken by the J Allen Hynek Centre for UFO Studies, of solely abductees, was in part testing the FPP hypothesis, while addressing the wider question of psychological characteristics of abductees.

Quoting their 1992 paper reporting their findings:

"Using the ICMI plus MMPI profile data, we found that our subjects as a whole cannot be characterised as fantasy-prone. Does this put an end to the hypothesis of Bartholomew and Basterfield? It is tempting to say yes, but here is a better answer. First, no study in the social or

psychological sciences is ever definitive when a field, like abduction research, is in its infancy ... Second, our sample size is small and could be affected by chance variation. But third and most important, it is our judgement that the abduction phenomenon is multicausal and that several mechanisms may be generating relatively similar reports." (Rodeghier et al 1992:80).

So, a testable, falsifiable scientific hypothesis was proposed by Bob and myself. It has twice been tested and appears not to explain the totality of abductions.

Further studies of the FPP hypothesis come to mind. For example, although the Hopkins/Jacobs genetic engineering hypothesis indicates that all female abductees would have been impregnated and their fetuses stolen, Jean Mundy's analysis of Omni magazine's survey indicated only some 9% of female abductees recalled a "missing fetus." It would therefore be interesting to determine if female abductees with "missing fetus" recall were more fantasy-prone than a control sample. Perhaps some elements of abductions have psychological counterparts.

Alternative psychological hypotheses

Does this indicate that we should consider that psychological hypotheses in general cannot explain abductions? I would argue not, for both the Ring and Rosing, and CUFOS studies, together with the original study by Slater in the 80's clearly indicates that abductees are not typical of the general population.

Citing Slater:

"To summarise, while this is a heterogeneous group in terms of overt personality style, it can be said that most of its members share being rather unusual and very interesting. They ..share..a certain richness of inner life ... Shared underlying emotional factors include a degree of identity disturbance, some deficits in the interpersonal sphere, and generally mild paranoid phenomenon..." (Bloecher et al 1985:10.)

Citing Ring & Rosing:

"What the Omega Project unequivocally demonstrates is that in fact not just anyone is likely to report undergoing a UFO encounter ... those who do are distinctive in various ways, as our study makes clear..." (Ring & Rosing 1990:54.)

Citing Rodeghier et al:

"As our results make clear ... the abductees we studied are not a random grouping from the general population. They are distinctive on various factors..." (Rodeghier et al 1992:85).

Conclusion

Whilst convinced by the wealth of evidence that the UFO phenomenon is worthy of serious study, and that some cases (e.g. Valensole, Socorro, Trans-en-Provence) indicate a physical component, I remain unconvinced that the Hopkins/Jacobs genetic engineering hypothesis is the definitive answer. If the FPP hypothesis fails testing, then we should move on to other testable, falsifiable hypotheses.

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Seeing Things: The Meaningfulness of "Mass Hallucination"

by Steve Mizrach
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When the terms "delusion" or "hallucination" are usually used in reference to Fortean (1) occurences, it is often done in such a way as to dismiss the phenomena and assign the null hypothesis to the occurence: "nothing happened." Outbreaks of flying saucer, cattle mutilation, or monster 'flaps' are said to be 'mass hysteria.' (The etymology of this word is rather odious. It stems from the medical belief that the *hystere* {womb} of women made them less rational; and in many cases hysterectomy was the preferred cure for such 'hysterical' women.) In the otherwise great book Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds, which describes the famous 'tulip mania' which gripped Europe (resulting in astronomical price inflation for pretty ordinary garden tulips) in the 19th century, many historical outbreaks of Fortean-type events are placed in the category of mass delusions. Sadly, the problem with this is that the psychological mechanisms of hallucination are very poorly understood, making this hypothesis overused and underexplanatory.

Also, the words *hallucination* and *delusion* are often used in an improperly interchangeable way. Delusions are beliefs in the nonexistent, not perceptions of the nonexistent. The sociology of mass delusion -- how irrational beliefs in nonexistents (such as the "June Bug" disease) may spread rapidly -- has been well studied. Sociologists have carefully examined the delusionary cases of false prophecies, mass panics, financial speculations, and the spreading of rumor and folklore. The more important question is how mass numbers of people can all perceive the same or similar nonexistents, and what role mass delusion plays in mass hallucination. (A famous case might be the 1938 "War of the Worlds" broadcast, in which the radio programme led people to believe that Martians were invading, and then thousands of people hallucinated such an event taking place.) It is hard from the historical record to divide cases of mass misperception, mass delusion, or false memory (of things that didn't ever happen) from ones of actual mass hallucination, where multiple people clearly saw the same nonexistent and described it accurately at the time.

Further, hallucinations should not be confused with *mirages* or *illusions*. Mirages are images of far-off objects that are produced by light refraction, causing a person to see something where it is not. ("Mirage" also is used to describe the 'oases' of water that people think they see in deserts, which are really just the waves of heat flowing over the dunes.) Therefore, a mirage is the image of an existent produced in a place where it is not. Optical illusions are tricks of the eye that causes someone to misperceive something, or misjudge things such as depth, distance, or size. One of the most famous optical illusions is the so-called Moon Illusion, where the moon appears to be much larger when it is closer to the horizon. The moon is not really any larger, of course, but *appears* to be. Optical illusions result from certain expectations about the world that our eyes fall prey to: we expect things which are smaller to be further away, which is why the illusion of 'perspective' makes two-dimensional paintings appear to be three-dimensional. Hallucinations are not misperceptions of existents, rather they are perceptions of nonexistents.

Even today, cognitive psychologists are not sure how one individual can see something that is not there. Insane people are frequently tormented by recurring visual hallucinations, as well as auditory hallucinations (voices telling them what to do) and delusions (such as megalomania.) But even those of us who are quite sane hallucinate. The most acute (waking) hallucinations occur right before and after dream-sleep, and are respectively known as *hypnagogic* or *hypnopompic*, but hallucinations can also occur during the altered states of consciousness (ASCs) brought on by the psychoactive chemicals known as "hallucinogens." Lysergic Acid (LSD) is one of the most potent hallucinogens, requiring only a tiny microdose to cause one to see first elementary *phosphenes* (basic light patterns) and then full hallucinations. Consumption of ergot-infected rye (which contains LSD) during the Middle Ages is thought to have brought on the outbreaks of St. Anthony's Fire (2) (where people saw demons everywhere) and the cases of witch-mania, which resulted in the horrific witch-burnings of the period.

Usually consuming most psychoactive plants and fungi in their natural state (the technology to synthesize chemical extracts only becoming developed in the 19th century with morphine) results in one getting a lot of other additional 'stuff' in each dose besides the main psychoactive ingredient, causing side effects of nausea, vomiting, dizziness, headaches, rash, itching, feelings of heat, and so forth. Ergot in the raw can be quite fatal, if not at least causing a whole bunch of deleterious side effects. So the true historical puzzles are the cases of mass hallucination in which no other symptoms were reported: in these cases ergot outbreaks may not be sufficient explanations. One of the best historical cases is the "Tarantelle" dance-mania of Italy. Whole Italian towns started dancing feverishly, claiming they were trying to dance around to avoid poisonous spiders or keep themselves out of knee-deep rivers of blood. Other cases might include the mass visions of the BVM or angelic armies during the medieval period -- assuming those were hallucinations.

Many medieval ascetics well understood how to induce individual hallucination through deprivation and suffering. Going for long periods without food or sleep and utilizing self-inflicted pain (through flogging, etc.) creates a buildup of opiates and endorphins in the brain, resulting in the religious visions they sought. Another method for causing hallucination is through hypnosis, though it has never really been established whether the person actually sees something that is not there or merely *acts* as if they do in order to satisfy the hypnotist. One of the most curious cases of individual hallucination in the psychological literature is

"Mary," a woman who saw many of her loved ones (including dead ones) standing nearby even when they weren't there. Her hallucinatory companions were so 'real' that monitoring equipment revealed that in her visual cortex, other objects became "blocked" from view when these nonexistent beings stood in front of them. Her auditory hallucinations were often "loud" enough to prevent her from hearing what her very real doctors were saying to her.

The general psychological understanding of vision is that it "happens" in the brain: cognition creates perception out of the raw data of sight. It is assumed that neural events in the visual cortex are what cause persons to see nonexistent things; Wilder Penfield was able to cause people to "re-view" episodes (see again as if they were happening right now) in their life in full detail by electrically stimulating parts of their brain. But how do you hallucinate an image of something you have never seen before, if it is not being recalled from memory? This is one of the deep riddles for dream psychologists -- of the reported cases where someone dreams of a person they have never met or seen a picture of and *describes them accurately*. Further, how can one hallucinate something which has never existed, such as unicorns or mermaids? (assuming for arguments' sake that there have not ever been such things, which some Forteans may doubt.) Can the brain transform "2-D" images from books (presumably the only place one might see a unicorn) into "3-D" moving hallucinations? While most psychologists assume such images are composites of other images -- the brain cannot create anything truly new, only just recombine parts of things that are known in new ways, they say -- it is still not clear how such a complex hallucinatory image might arise in the brain.

And if you can hallucinate an image or episode from the past, how is it that the hallucinations of someone like "Mary" can have "conversations" with her and respond to her? Perhaps the same mechanism as the brain utilizes in 'waking dreams' (i.e. daydreams) is involved, effectively 'scripting' and 'directing' the hallucinations, like dreams. However the progress of narrative (as most dreamers know) in dreams is often disjointed and nonlinear, yet waking hallucinations seem to behave quite 'rationally' -- almost as if they were 'real.' Further, it is now known that a small percentage of the population is prone to Fantasy-Prone Personality (FPP) syndrome, spending almost all of their waking lives in imaginary worlds of their own creation, meeting with 'hallucinatory' associates (like the "imaginary friends" of childhood) which are as real to them as any other person in the 'real' one. (Nonetheless, one should point out that the Freudian theory of hallucination being equivalent to fantasy is insufficient. Fantasy satisfies the wish-fulfillment urge of the id, but many hallucinations are often quite horrible or terrifying and cannot be said to satisfy any of the needs or desires of the individual.) The fact that such hallucinatory worlds are as logically self-consistent and complex as the 'real' one means the mental mechanism for 'scripting' hallucination must be complex itself.

If it is a mystery how individual complex hallucinations are induced, then it surely must be a greater mystery as to how mass hallucinations are induced. Science knows of no mechanism by which individuals can share hallucinations, and when most scientists use the term, they rarely admit that "mass hallucination" has no explanatory power. (In the psychological realm, it is referred to as *folie a deux*, but the mechanisms of transference remain unexplained.)

Especially when such hallucinations are separated in time and place by thousands of miles or several decades but share many common details as reported by their percipients. Perhaps some parapsychological mechanism is involved, because what might happening is that the hallucination is of the contents of someone else's mind rather than yours... which may offer a possible explanation for mass hallucination. One hypothesis might be that an individual hallucination becomes telepathically 'projected' into the minds of others, resulting in them all seeing the same thing. The cause of the "Tarantelle" might have been one poor, besotten Italian peasant, drunk with wine, who began to 'see' spiders, and mentally spread this illusion to all his fellow village dwellers.

Unfortunately, this does not give us the complete solution to the Fortean riddle of mass hallucination. How does the original image get put into the brain of the person who 'projects' it onto everyone else through ESP? There are ways that exist to cause people to see an image 'projected' into their brain like an image on a screen. Some experiments have found that this can be done though stimulation of the temporal lobes by Extra-Low Frequency (ELF-EM) radiation. Perhaps natural phenomena, such as Earth's electromagnetic field, cause this to happen quite randomly. (Persinger feels this is the reason for high paranormal sightings in areas of great geomagnetic activity, since he seems to assume most of the paranormal is hallucination.) But in those cases we would also expect the hallucinations to be random: people would all hallucinate different things. We cannot escape the troubling fact that in order for an image to be projected simultaneously into multiple brains, *there must be somebody running the projector*. Some sort of intelligence must be involved. For Jungians this intelligence might well be the 'gestalt' of human minds that they identify as the "collective unconscious," a reservoir of archetypes built up by the aeons of human experience. Or it could be "Gaia" or "the Great Phonograph in the Sky" or some other type of consciousness.

The alternative possibility, which may sound familiar to students of Castenada, may be that simultaneously a large number of people may suddenly undergo awareness of some other realm of existence. Other people, not within the same state of consciousness, cannot perceive what they are perceiving, and therefore call it "hallucination." Perhaps within the Fortean "window zones" across the globe, large numbers of people can occasionally see into other dimensions or parallel universes. A common theory in the occult literature is that the "hallucinations" of schizophrenics who report that they are surrounded by invisible entities is merely their awakening to the fact that *this is actually the case* — that in fact some cases of madness may be an adverse reaction to awareness of other forms of consciousness in realms other than ours, normally separated from us by our limited perceptions. Castenada describes the techniques for moving the 'point of awareness' so as to view other planes of existence, but nowhere does he describe how a groups of people might simultaneously move that point to the same place, although he does hint that for closely linked groups it might be possible for a sorceror to move them *en masse*. This may be the key to the famous Indian rope trick, where a fakir convinces a crowd he has climbed a rope into an invisible space, but cameras record that nothing has happened.

This leads me to an important point. Even if the UFO abduction phenomenon is 'nothing but' "mass hallucination" as some writers have claimed, this makes it no less mysterious or puzzling to Forteans. *Because that means some agency has caused people to share the same or highly similar hallucination all over the globe for the past 30 years!* John Keel has taken for a long time the position that the majority of the UFO phenomenon is hallucinatory - a position even some "nuts and bolts" ufologists have seemed to suggest by positing that the 'aliens' are capable of "brainwave entrainment" (making you see what they want to see.) The problem with dealing with UFOs that Keel (and others) have is precisely how to separate what is hallucinatory from what is not. (Jerome Clark at one point took the position that "the Unidentified" was complete hallucination with all material effects being the results of psychosomatic changes or psychokinesis by percipients.) (Keel also seems to think that UFOs may be *tulpas* or thought- form projections, which, according to Alexandra David-Neel, can be quite solid and physical {and dangerous}, unlike hallucinations.)

The problem is that we have to separate illusionary images projected into the air which people see (such as holograms) from images projected into the brain. The technology to do the first is easy, the second is quite difficult. The phantom cities seen in the sky seem to fall into the first category while many phantasms and apparitions (i.e. 'ghosts') appear to fall into the second category -- at least in so far as they are visible to some people and not to others. Many parapsychologists suppose that many are 'tape-recordings' of events which are 'recorded' because of their psychic intensity and then 'played back' for unsuspecting brains. This could be the cause of many other kinds of hallucination, such as the "slips in time" where people have found themselves among events in earlier centuries of history. If there is a type of 'morphogenetic field' preserving the patterns of past experiences, this might provide the reason for the similarity of hallucinatory visions because they are all formed by the same template.

Forteans must explore the riddles of mass hallucination, because it offers great insights into the mysteries of cognition, perception, and the world itself. Rather than leaving hallucination as a "catch-all" debunking technique for the supposed 'skeptics,' we should be willing to utilize it as an explanation for unnatural events, but not oblivious to the paranormality of its occurence, *because mass hallucination remains an unexplained event.* Even if 70,000 people all hallucinated the BVM at Fatima, *that is still a mystery.* (What agency caused them all to see her at once? Why?) The Fortean trail should stop once it has reached the pitfalls of hoaxes, fraud, or misperception, but not hallucination. Because mass hallucination remains an unexplained event in the world of perception even if it is not an event in the 'real' world of other Fortean oddities, and may require some of the paranormal explanations invoked above in order to be fully understood.

Footnotes

(1) The term comes from Charles Fort, author of several books, in whose name the Fortean Society was created to investigate unexplained events. I use the term Fortean in the generic sense to refer to "those interested in anomalous events." Fort's books catalogued such things as moving lights in the sky, falls of mysterious substances and colored rain, spontaneous human combustion, etc.
(2) So named because of the vivid visions of tempting demons experienced during the ascetic vigils of that saint.

Sightings in Mexico City: A CSETI Investigation

by Dr. Joseph Burkes
originally published in UNICUS Vol. 2 No. 4, 1993
Dr. Joseph Burkes is a medical internist who works in Southern California. He is Working Group Coordinator in that region for CSETI's CE-5 Initiative and he serves on CSETI's Executive Council.

The Center for the Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence (CSETI), is a scientific research organization dedicated to the better understanding of Extraterrestrial Intelligences (ETI) and their civilizations. CSETI believes that the extraterrestrial hypothesis is not just a theory, but is a fact of life. CSETI is attempting to perform real research of UFOs and ETs by employing specific techniques and prearranged methods of attraction, or as CSETI's director Dr. Steven Greer calls it 'vectoring in an ET's spacecraft to a carefully chosen research site.' At these sites, investigators attempt to peacefully interact with an extraterrestrial spacecraft and its occupants by using a variety of techniques. This process includes using powerful lights, meditation, and prerecorded sounds taken from an actual formation of a crop circle.

CSETI members use these techniques in locations where there have been waves of UFO sightings. So far, the results have been quite impressive. Dr. Greer started this national organization after having a transformational encounter of his own. Dr. Greer calls these human initiated contacts with the ETI, Close Encounters of the Fifth Kind (CE-5), and has successfully facilitated such interactions on numerous occasions not only the U.S. and Europe, but also in Mexico.

I was selected to join the Mexican investigation, because I speak Spanish and more importantly, because I have been leading a group of Los Angeles based CSETI researchers since August of last year. As the coordinator for the L.A. group, I have been practicing my hiking skills by regularly leading our team into remote locations in the Southern California area to make contact with ETI.

These skills came in very handy during our investigation in Mexico. Upon arriving in Mexico City, we immediately drove to the base of an active volcano and set up camp. The team consisted of five members. For security reasons, the exact location of our research sites cannot be given at this time. Last year, during an investigation that was being conducted in England, hordes of tabloid journalists and uninvited UFO enthusiasts invaded the private farm where Dr. Greer was leading a team effort. Some of these unruly intruders had to be forcibly removed and several arrests were made. Because the Mexico UFO sightings are still very active, and an important part of CSETI's ongoing research, the term 'volcanic zone' will be used for our research location.

The first night after driving up the mountain road on the slope of a volcano, we set up our camera equipment, radar detector (radar detectors pick up microwaves and can serve as inexpensive UFO alarms), and sleeping bags in a clearing on a hillside surrounded by pine trees. From this site, we had a good view of the town in the valley below. We watched as one UFO appeared, then possibly two, over

the town below. They were amber-colored glowing globe-shaped objects which behaved as though they were intelligently controlled. When Dr. Greer aimed his half a million candlepower light to signal the object, it appeared to signal back.

The sighting of a globe-shaped UFO had been described to local investigators several weeks prior to our visit. We later obtained a copy of a home video which showed just such an object taken at twilight from a local restaurant during a wedding party. During our first night on the volcano, the temperature dropped into the low thirties and Dr. Greer was suddenly hit by a powerful amber-colored beam of light that appeared to come from the sky although we could see no identifiable source. We were very surprised by this flash of light and no ill effects were felt.

The next day, we travelled to a new location where, according to local authorities, sightings of UFOs during both day and night are a common occurrence. They told us that 80% of the population has seen a UFO and that many of these sightings are close enough to see the details of the UFOs structure. We found a research site in a field that was in full view of an 18,000 foot high volcano named Popocatepetl.

The first night we saw a large number of nocturnal lights that moved silently back and forth between the nearby volcanoes in an almost shuttle like activity. Although we signalled at them numerous times, we were unable to attract any to our research site. However, the next night we were successful beyond my wildest dreams. Around 11:45 p.m. Dr. Greer directed our attention to a light that was moving obliquely near our position. We excitedly began signaling it with our lights, and it changed direction directly towards us. As it approached, we could see that it was triangular shaped with a white light at each corner and a red beacon in the center. It was totally silent, highly maneuverable and came towards us in a wide arc. Flying close behind the craft was another smaller craft which seemed to be escorting the larger ship that was at least 300 feet across. The actual span of that beautiful, dark and silent craft may have actually been closer to two or possibly three football fields in size.

The craft descended to less than 500 feet and turned on an incredibly powerful bank of forward mounted lights. It slowed down considerably while continuing to respond to Dr. Greer's light signals. As we each rushed to our camera equipment, things started to go wrong. The craft stopped its descent and its flight behavior changed dramatically. Up until then, the UFO had appeared to be simulating the flight pattern of a conventional aircraft intending to land. Instead it slowly started to turn in a wide arc, which allowed us to clearly see its underside. Even though it aborted its false landing, the craft continued to answer our light signals.

As all this was happening, we suddenly realized that all our cameras, video, 35mm. automatic SLR, and even a cheap 110 spring activated camera were not operational. The video was clearly on, but nothing was being recorded and we even checked to see if the lens cap was off! Our seven hundred dollar 35mm camera was also on, yet it would not function and the Brownie-type camera would not even click when the button was pushed. It appeared as if someone or something did not want us to document this encounter with any type of photographs. We checked out all the equipment later, and it worked normally for the remainder of our trip.

Although this event was the highlight of our journey, other strange and fascinating events also occurred. The next night a light rain kept us in our vehicles and we had to keep watch of the skies through our windshields. After a while, we were able to shine our lights into the sky again. As we were signalling any possible activity nearby, we noticed a flashlight at the end of the field that was directed up into the sky, mocking the movement of our lights. Suddenly, there was the sound of an explosion coming from a shotgun blast across the field, and we noticed the shadowy figure of a man moving rapidly towards us. Without a moments hesitation, Dr. Greer gave the order to evacuate. With our headlights turned off, we drove at high speed along the bumpy dirt road to the paved highway that led back to town.

We all felt that was a close call and that our efforts at interplanetary diplomacy could have been ended by an angry Mexican farmer. That frightening experience caused us to move to a new site a short distance away where the locals regularly observe UFO activity. That night, much to our amazement, at about the same time of night as the other sightings, a triangular-shaped craft appeared over the ridge on the horizon. As Dr. Greer started to reach for his light to signal the craft, it rapidly pulsed a flash of light at us and then quickly turned to the north and descended behind a small hill and was out of view. It seemed to be more than a coincidence. It was as if it was looking for us.

The next day we visited the local restaurant where the globelike strobing UFO had been videotaped. The manager told us about a haunting experience that two children had undergone several months before. While walking on the slopes of the volcano with their farm animals, they encountered a small grey-white being without ears or a mouth. He had large dark eyes, and he appeared to be able to communicate without speaking. The children were told by this being that the nearby volcano was going to erupt, and that they should not be afraid. The strange being told them that he and his friends would keep them from harm. What followed was even more enigmatic. The grey being said that there was going to be a war and that it would start in New York. According to the manager who knew the children, they did not know where or even what New York was. They were poor, had no television, and knew little of current events. They reportedly had to be told what New York was, because they had never heard the word before.

This account held much interest for the local villagers since the volcano, Popocatepetl, has now become active. From the base of our research, we observed white smoke continuously pouring out of its summit. The government is aware of the situation and has issued warnings to the local population to formulate evacuation plans.

In the parking lot of the restaurant, just prior to our interview with the manager. Dr. Taylor, Jeff Baker and I saw a metallic disc with no wings or identifiable markings flying towards the volcano into a cloud bank. The sighting lasted less than ten seconds, and I got the distinct impression that it had rectangular portholes. The craft appeared to be small, perhaps twenty to thirty feet across, and was less than one kilometer away when it entered the clouds at a steep angle, but it did not appear to emerge from the other

side. This sighting seemed to be the beginning of a rash of sightings that followed the next day, February 4, 1993. It was our last day in Mexico and Dr. Greer was driving the lead car when he spotted two more similar looking discs. Dr. Greer and Shari Adamiak even spotted one hovering near the end of the runway as we were departing. Prior to leaving, we had a heart warming meeting with three Mexican researchers who shared their close encounters with us. We pledged international cooperation in our efforts as citizens for open diplomacy with ETI. They promised to help us on any future trips to Mexico and they even expressed interest in sponsoring a workshop to teach CSETI's contact protocols.

This exciting and memorable experience has confirmed for me the validity of our approach and I believe that we can better understand ETI by willfully initiating open contact. Our organization is young and our results are still in their preliminary stages, but the prospects are quite promising. Prior to traveling to Mexico, I thought CSETI's stated goal of peaceful, mutually beneficial relationship with ET'S, while being visionary and very positive, could only be achieved far off in the distant future. I now feel that this may not be the case, and that the goal of having a fully conscious on-board face to face meeting may occur sooner than I thought possible. Our persistent request to document these encounters with video and other photographic technology may not initially have been honored, nevertheless, with a relationship that appears to be growing in trust and cooperation, even this troublesome technical difficulty may soon be resolved.

Originality and truth are found only in the details
Stendahl (1926) Lucien Leuwen

I've met people who say "I'm psychedelic and I know exactly what you're talking about" ... blah blah blah. So you say, "Well, what's your drug history?" And they say, "I took MDMA twice." Look, just because you've had a glass of cold water doesn't mean you are ready to be food editor for the Larousse Gastronomique. There's more to it than that, my friend.
Terence McKenna, in MONDO 2000 #10

Hubris: a concept which says if you put yourself out a little too far, then not only will you probably be punished by having the branch break, but we won't even feel sorry for you — you'll be ostracized by the tribe.
Hans Moravec in Mondo 2000 #11

Evolution of Public Opinion on UFOs

by Robert J. Durant
International UFO Reporter 18(6), Nov/Dec 1993, p.9

I don't usually review articles in International UFO Reporter and MUFON UFO Journal, because I figure that most of the readers of BAE also follow these journals. I make an exception for the following article because it is so apropos of the mandate of BAE. I strongly recommend you check out this piece, which includes a detailed review of poll results from 1947-1991, and comments by Fred Whiting, Philip Klass, Leo Sprinkle, David Jacobs, and Robert Hall.

If you are not already a subscriber to IUR, you are missing out on some of the best and most topical work in Ufology. A subscription to IUR is a benefit of Associates of the Center for UFO Studies for a contribution of US$25 or more (foreign Associates add US$5 for delivery). Write J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659.

Introduction
Since August 1947 the Gallup Poll has conducted seven surveys of public opinion in the United States on the subject of "flying saucers." The Roper Organization has conducted six polls, and Audits and Surveys, Inc., has taken two polls. The results show that the reality of UFOs became a mainstream belief in the mid-1970s, when 51% of those surveyed said that UFOs are real. The public's definition of "real" does not, however, necessarily imply acceptance of the extraterrestrial (ET) hypothesis. Belief in sentient life in space has also increased dramatically during this period. Belief in the reality of UFOs increased steadily until around 1978, then declined. Huge numbers of adult Americans claim to have seen a UFO. The data present a series of puzzles for Ufologists.
...
Why has the man in the street persistently refused to follow the establishment line on UFOs? This issue can and should be pursued without reference to the nature of UFOs, that is, whether they are event-level reality or psychological aberrations. From its totally skeptical and cynical vantage, social science has a unique opportunity to study a new religion in the making. Questions of this sort should be of major importance to sociologists, political scientists, journalists, and historians. Perhaps this article will trigger serious interest from practitioners of these disciplines.
...
Conclusion
UFO proponents have won the war for public opinion. For every fundamentalist Christian there are five UFO believers. Roman Catholics comprise by far the largest Christian denomination in the United States, and UFO believers outnumber them by a ratio of better than two to one. UFO believers outnumber the voters who placed Reagan and Bush and Clinton in office.
These statistics ought to be brought forcefully to the attention of journalists and politicians, who seem locked into the view that belief in UFOs is an aberrant opinion held by a small portion of the population. The fact is that when a pundit makes a joke about UFOs, only one out of three listeners or readers laughs. The rest are either offended or uneasy. That UFOs are real is a solidly mainstream belief.

The Extraordinary Encounter Continuum Hypothesis and its Implications for the Study of Belief Materials

by Peter M. Rojcewicz, Ph.D.
Folklore Forum 19(2) 1985, p. 131-152

My observations in last issue's editorial about the need to consider abductions in the light of other anomalous experiences was made much more eloquently some years ago by Peter Rojcewicz, co-chair of Humanities at The Juilliard School, in the article excerpted below. We ran excerpts from Dr. Rojcewicz's essay on Men In Black in Vol. 3, No. 3 (June 1992).

Introduction
Most studies of UFOs have confused their structural and phenemenological natures due to inadequacies inherent in both the definition and classification of the subject matter. The acronym "UFO" in popular usage means "flying saucer," that is, a hardware product of an extraterrestrial technology. This reduction of the UFO question to the study of only "flying saucers" has negative effects upon the study of belief materials with regards to 1) definition, which determines our academic levels of involvement and the formulation of research priorities; 2) taxonomy, since our classification systems define the anatomy of the subject matter at hand; 3) epistemology, because encounters with nonordinary entities raise the issue of the nature and means of knowledge and "knowability", and 4) ontology, around which revolves the question of socially discovering alternate realities through various cultural experiences and modesof being.

Current definitions and taxonomies do not display an appreciation for the complex interrelatedness of "flying saucers" with numerous folk belief traditions. A hypothesis that sees "flying saucers" on a continuum with numerous other cultural manifestations is offered here as an alternative to the conventional exclusionist's argument that "flying saucers" are completely discrete and self-contained. The continuum hypothesis provides a viable explanation of the occurrence of a specified group of human encounters with the extraordinary. This proposition, based on substantial ethnographic data, is asserted as a provisional conjecture (working hypothesis) to guide investigations in the area of folk beliefs.
...

Description of the Extraordinary Encounter Continuum
In order to more fully understand the nature of the full spectrum of human confrontation with anomalous entities, the operative term "Extraordinary Encounter Continuum" is offered here.

These entities can be referred to as "nonordinary," "unorthodox," "nonconventional," or "supernatural" insofar as they: 1) demonstrate spontaneous activity; 2) demonstrate the ability to produce images independent of sense perception, 3) demonstrate complete control over these images (Jung 1958:66-67); 4) represent an actual order qualitatively different from our everyday world which 5) interacts with our material world in complex ways. 6) Belief in such entities is cross-cultural.

Enumeratively defined, the Extraordinary Enounter Continuum refers to human confrontation with the anomalous, whether in the form of "beings" (e.g. extraterrestrials, fairies, monsters, etc.). "entities" (e.g. apparitions, energy forms, tulpas, etc.), "objects" (e.g. spacecraft, vimanas, fiery shields and crosses, etc.). or unusual light(s). The term "flying saucers" is but one descriptive and interpretive frame people employ after confrontations with a particular kind of nonordinary entity along the Extraordinary Encounter Continuum of experience. Encounters with the anomalous can occur as an abduction, out-of-body travel (OBE), near-death experience (NDE), shamanic journey, or combination of two or more of these forms. No individual encounter category is more important in itself than another. The predominance of attention given in this article to UFOs is arbitrary and could easily be focused upon another category of the continuum.

All the traditions along the Extraordinary Encounter Continuum are discrete but related. They are separate but not separated, like an individual's relationship to a hand. Although the traditions can be distinguished from each other, they nevertheless display similar complex patterns of appearance and activity. The continuum hypothesis maintains that to more fully understand the complex nature of nonordinary events, one must see them in relation to the larger context of human encounters with unorthodox entities. All phenomena along the encounter a continuum share at least a borderline, as do a ship's bottom with the water, the ocean with the waves, and the waves with the sky overhead. This hypothesis argues that some belief traditions are so closely related phenomenologically as to warrant inclusion under the umbrella term "Extraordinary Encounter Continuum."
...

The Reflective Principle: Symbiosis and Short-Circuit
Proponents of the "reflective principle" argue that a percipient's personal and culturebound values significantly shape their nonordinary experience. The coloring of experience by a percipient's psychology or cultural beliefs does not invalidate the potential reality of the event; it merely complicates it. A familiarity with the generic conventions of accounts of human encounters with the supernatural in general, and the specific folk belief tradition in particular, should reveal pressure-points, as well as values, within the generic frame. A psychological profile of the informants should indicate how much of their community's belief traditions are mirrored in their individual accounts. Cognizant of the framing structure and conventions of the witnesses and, if the account has made its way into print, the conventions of thought and style of the popular or academic author(s), we can measure the potential for individual variation and elaboration. Measuring personal or cultural reflectivity allows the phenomenology to come through.

The reflective principle often plays a role in how a witness identifies and interprets a nonconventional experience, but it does not always do so. Some good data now exist indicating that people completely unaware of a traditional body of beliefs undergo recognizable anomalous experiences (Hufford 1982:15; Moody 1976:123-24).

Michael Elliot, conducting initial research on "flying saucers" in 1980, never heard or read about the esoteric UFO tradition of the "Men in Black'"(MIB) when he encountered a MIB in a library in Philadelphia (Rojcewicz 1981). Encounters with manifestations of the Virgin Mary are not limited to Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, or Coptics. J. Gordon Helton (1980:316), a Methodist minister and Director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion in Evanston, Illinois, admits to having a Marian sighting. Ramakrishna, founder of the Vedanta Society, has likewise testified to having had a similar vision. Witnesses to anomalies like UFO often find that their experiences contradict rather than mirror their values and beliefs, and yet they still insist upon the validity of the events (Hall 1974: 215-216).

Just as traditional understandings can influence descriptions and interpretations of one's experience, so also the repeated encounters with nonordinary entities can influence a body of traditional beliefs. From this perspective, people hold particular beliefs because certain extraordinary events take place. Proposing that experience influences tradition at least as often as tradition influences people's interpretations of their experiences, the continuum hypothesis can account for and predict belief in the presence of two or more folk belief traditions in the same experience. Most present belief-related definitions and classification systems have not led investigators to appreciate the complex connections among folk traditions. ...

Methodology

The Extraordinary Encounter Continuum represents the full spectrum of human interactions with anomalous phenomena through time and space. It is, first, a descriptive phenomenology which systematically organizes parallels between human encounters with nonordinary beings regarding such features as their appearance, powers, and effects; and second, a hermeneutical method drawing upon salient ideas from several disciplines and relying primarily on cultural and historical data, proposing specific patterns to better explain the nature of inexplicable encounters. Neither method, it must be stressed, necessitates the researchers' acceptance of all informants' accounts as true, but it does presuppose a refusal to reject *a priori* their potential validity.

An important theoretical assumption of the continuum hypothesis inherent in both the phenomenological and hermeneutical methods is that not all reports of anomalous encounters are products of hysterics, hoaxes, or perceptual and mental impairment. ...

Frequently Recurring Traits

...

Despite wide variation in the circumstances surrounding a person's encounter with the extraordinary and in the kind of people undergoing them, there are nevertheless striking similarities among the reports of the experiences themselves (Lowe 1979:67-79). These continuities are so significant that one can easily pick out ten elements which appear apain and again in published and unpublished accounts of "flying saucers" and their occupants, near-death and out-of-body experiences, and shamanic journeys.

<u>The Encounter Experience</u>

1. Feelings of friendliness, love, fearlessness.
2. Being Chosen: "mission" motif.
3. Instruction/Enlightenment.
4. Passing through material objects
5. Beings of light/Unusual lights.
6. Journeys to nonordinary realms.
7. Tunnels/Enclosures/Paths and borders/Limits.
8. (Nearly) Ineffable.
9. Revelatory moments.
10. Psychic manifestations.

Only four of the above listed traits will be explored in this article. [Only one trait, Revelatory Experience, is excerpted here; the others discussed in the article are Bright or Unusual Lights and Borders and Limits, and Journeys to Nonordinary Realms]. The remaining features will be developed in a future publication.

...

Revelatory Experience

To conclude the discussion of the four selected features that appear with great frequency among accounts of "flying saucers," OBEs, NDEs, and shamanic journeys, let us now turn to an examination of the lasting life impression that such encounters have upon many percipients. Betty Andreasson believes that her abductors "awakened" something in her when they touched her forehead during the physical examination they conducted upon her. Like the shamans of many cultures, Betty had her own revelatory visions.

> It was as if the infinite opened up on me...I was seeing inventions so far advanced -- thousands of years advanced -- and yet it seemed just a scratch in the infinite. (Fowler 1980:166)

Betty Andreasson's confrontation with the aliens, particularly her interaction with her two "teachers," "Quazgaa" and "Joohop," seemed to have a stabilizing effect upon her volatile emotional condition. It has been argued elsewhere that Betty's abduction experience served as a useful "tool" facilitating her mental and emotional competency (Rojcewicz 1984: 640-670). Shamans also undergo personality adjustment or reorganization resulting from their encounters with guardian spirits and animal powers of a transcendent reality. Both the shaman and the patient receive a new identity through the healing process. Sometimes this experience occurs to non-shamans after undergoing a visionary quest for the purpose of receiving a guardian spirit power, or it may occur after a serious illness as among the North and South American Indians, as well as the natives of Siberia. "Such a radically profound and revelatory experience often encourages the individual to take up the way of the shaman" (Harner 1982:63). People who have lived through close encounters with death have stated that they subsequently feel their lives deepened, their perspectives expanded. They are more reflective and interested in issues of a philosophical nature. Life contains much for them to learn. One informant told Moody "I felt like I aged overnight (1976:83) after this happened, because it opened up a whole new world for me that I never knew could possibly exist." The most common characteristics of revelatory experiences are a sudden transformation of the percipients' personality and experience-ordering systems (Hufford 1983:311; Steiger 1982:148).

While many of these personality and life transformations are positive, many are not. John A. Keel has observed from his fieldwork that:

> The illumination experience changes their lives. but it has no effect on this world. In many instances people are changed for the worse instead of the better, just as the majority of all supernatural manifestations are harmful or at least senseless. (1975:20)

Whether we can agree or not with Keel that a majority of all supernatural manifestations are harmful or senseless to the percipients, he has nevertheless documented cases of emotional collapse and mental disorder (1976:229). According to mystical tradition. whether a confrontation with nonordinary realities is harmful or not depends largely upon skilled guidance and appropriate preparations (Hufford 1985:109).

...

Conclusion

Arguing here for the relatedness among various folk traditions that compose the Extraordinary Encounter Continuum should not be interpreted merely as a search for functional equivalents. It would be unsupportable to claim, for example, that an OBE is simply a UFO abduction of another name. Such a conclusion would be dangerous since the important differences between the two phenomena would be unjustifiably lost. In addition, it has not been argued here that because these folk traditions are related they are indicators of an objectively real order that can only be extraterrestrial. It should be quite clear, however, that extraordinary encounter reports are significant, not only for the study of folk belief, but also for studies of the acquisition of knoweldge and the delimitation of realities.

This article is part of an ongoing attempt to develop a coherent hypothesis that neither rejects *a priori* reports of anomalous experiences simply because they lack strict scientific verification, nor embellishes them in order to prove that the supernatural realm exists. The continuum hypothesis insists that investigation of the alleged objective reality behind beliefs in nonordinary events is an important function of the belief-oriented folklorist, despite some scholarly opinion to the contrary (Degh 1977:244; Bullard 1977:216, 218). It may well prove that phenomena along the Extraordinary Encounter Continuum are not scientific problems but authentic experiential manifestations. This fact would not necessarily invalidate the significance of these extraordinary events and may instead point to the boundaries of orthodox scientific procedure and scope. In either case, a general consideration of the overall encounter continuum should prove the best approach to date for defining accurately the anatomy of various as yet inexplicable phenomena like UFOS, as well as for the construction of reliable belief taxonomies. It must be understood, however, that the operative term "Extraordinary Encounter Continuum" serves primarily as an explanatory context for investigation and not yet as the definitive description of confrontations with the unknown.

From the Medical Literature

Hypnotic regression to childhood and infancy - A Literature Review

What is happening when an adult regresses under hypnosis or guided imagery and relives or remembers events that happened as a child, or an infant? How much does the adult mind influence the form, content, and affect of the childhood memory as recalled under hypnotic regression? To what extent is the experience recalled, experienced, and expressed to the hypnotist with the original perception and cognition (with all the distortions which this implies)? Most importantly, with what degree of certainty do we know the answers to these questions? (And what is that certainty based on?)

These are key questions for the abduction field, in which hypnotic regression to recall instances of abduction or contact in childhood and infancy is, in some circles, common practice. This section reports on attempts in the mental health literature to explore the validity of hypnotic age regression.

1. Hypnotic age regression and the autokinetic effect.
EJ Van Denburg
Am J Clin Hypn 1990 Jul;33(1):50-5

Based on research with children, we hypothesized that hypnotically age-regressed adult subjects would respond differentially across stimuli conditions on the autokinetic illusion. We assigned 18 highly susceptible subjects, assessed on the Harvard Group Susceptibility Scale, to one of three treatment groups: waking control, standard hypnotic induction, and age regression. Three target shapes, a control stimulus (circle), a representational stimulus (profile of a man), and a symbolic stimulus (cross) were presented. Results failed to show reinstatement of childlike performance on this perceptual illusion. The conceptual and empirical implications for future age-regression studies on memory, perception, and emotion are discussed.

—from the article—

While hypnotic age regression has impressive anecdotal evidence (Erickson & Kubie, 1941; Gill & Brenman, 1961), it has been difficult to demonstrate empirically that hypnotically age-regressed adults are functionally equivalent to children. Yates (1961) and Barber (1962) reviewed early studies, and

concluded that while the "good" hypnotic subject vividly imagines he or she is a child, and behaves in a "childlike" manner, behavior on standard measures is often not comparable to children. Orne and O'Connell (1961); O'Connell, Shor, & Orne, (1970); and Young (1940) also questioned the validity of hypnotic age regression.

Later researchers improved on the methodology of early studies. Greenleaf (1969) examined subjects serving as their own control on developmental tasks under age regression and hypnotic simulation (Orne, 1959). He concluded age regression produces a "mixed," not total, regression but that age regression led to more vivid, childlike responses than simulation. Gard and Kurtz (1979) hypothesized age-regressed subjects would appear "younger" on cognitive tests than simulators. Results were opposite the predicted direction, although hypnotized and age-regressed subjects had more emotional shifts than simulators.

Given current data, it may be impossible to reinstate "childlike" cognitions with age regression, although perceptions and feelings are childlike. Within the psychology of perception, effects of age regression on perceptual illusions have been studied.

Parrish, Lundy, and Leibowitz (1969) found responses to the Ponzo and Poggendorff illusions among age-regressed subjects were comparable to children. Ascher, Barber, and Spanos (1972), however, failed to cross-validate these results and noted marked variability in all subjects' responses to both illusions.

Despite variability with the Ponzo and Poggendorff illusions, researchers have shown age changes with other illusions (e.g., Pressey & Wilson, 1978). Of relevance to this study, Borresen (1979) examined children's responses to the autokinetic illusion: the apparent movement of a stationary light in darkness. Several authors discuss variables affecting latency, direction, and extent of movement (Royce, Carran, Aftanas, Lehman, & Blumenthal, 1966; Levy, 1972). Also of interest is meaningfulness of target shapes (Borresen, 1973, 1979; Toch, 1962).

In Borresen's 1979 study, children in five age groups (4, 6, 8, 10, and 12) viewed stimuli of varying symbolic complexity: control (circle); geometrical (arrow); representational (car); and symbolic (cross). Although he found no differences in movement with the control stimulus as age increased, other stimuli led to decreased movement with increased age. These results may have occurred because young children have not learned the meaning of complex stimuli. As learning increases with age, such stimuli likely acquire meaning, lessen in ambiguity, and stabilize. This presumption is based on research on the retina of adults (Pritchard, 1961). Although simple figures (e.g. circles) vanish when the retina is stabilized, complex targets (e.g., facial profiles) disappear slowly or partially.

Although Borresen's study is unreplicated, it provides a check on age regression: might age-regressed subjects, like children, respond differentially across stimuli on the autokinetic illusion? Specifically, it is predicted: (1) Age-regressed subjects will report more movement than non-age-regressed subjects on high-meaning targets (symbolic Christian cross; representational-human profile); (2) Age-regressed subjects will *not* differ from non-age-regressed subjects on a control target (circle).

Results

...Contrary to predictions, hypnotically age-regressed subjects did not differ from hypnotized or control subjects in perceived movement on the symbolic (cross) or representational (man) targets. There were, however, significant differences across groups in perceived target movement....illusion responsiveness was characterized by high variability.

Conclusions

...This study, like others (e.g., Page, 1985), tried to show literal, objective shifts. In contrast, Nash (1987, 1988) and with his colleagues (Nash, Drake, Wiley, Khalsa & Lynn, 1986) urge that we drop the claim that age regression literally reinstates childhood processes. Nash (1987) suggests: "Hypnotic age regression may be of the same ilk as hypnotic age progression or past-life regression: it elicits a profoundly believed-in experience that may have important diagnostic and therapeutic properties and may, because it is hypnosis, involve a different mode of processing information (e.g., primary process mentation), but it does not seem to involve a bonafide return to or reinstatement of childhood" (p. 50)

2. A Study of the Effects of Hypnotic Regression on the Auditory Evoked Response

K.K. Aravindakshan, F.A. Jenner, L.P. Souster
Int J Clin Exp Hypnosis, 1988, Vol. 36, No. 2, 89-95

Hypnotic regression in 6 hypnotizable Ss experienced in regression was studied by means of the auditory evoked response (AER). AER latency and amplitude is affected by arousal, attention, stimulus, strength, and age. Ss aged between 27 and 61 years were regressed to the age of 7-9 years, and AERs were compared among three states of consciousness: normal awareness, hypnotic relaxation, and hypnotic regression. There was no change in AER morphology in the direction of that seen in children. Thus, age regression is not seen as a reversion to an earlier stage of neurological development but perhaps as role playing which is spontaneous and uninhibited, with the benefit of innocent belief in its accuracy.

[from the Discussion]

...Like previous investigators, the present authors noticed that the tracings were cleaner and easier to produce during hypnosis, although the changes in neurological development observed by Raikov (1982) [see below] were not evident in the present result. No shift in latency of the AER during age regression was found compared to the adult normal state of awareness.

There is not doubt that age regression is convincing in its quality and content and has therapeutic value, but it was not possible in the present study to show how much of age regression is more than intensive role playing; this point has been evaluated by Orne (1951) who refers to "structuring a subjectively real situation and reacting to it in an emotionally and intellectually appropriate fashion."

3. Age Regression to Infancy by Adult Subjects in Deep
V. L. Raikov
Am J Clin Hypnosis, Vol. 22, No. 3, January 1980

An experiment in age regression to early infancy is described. Three groups are distinguished on the basis of their changed states of consciousness and reaction to hypnotic suggestions. Conclusions are that reproduction under hypnosis of the components of infancy and early childhood is in a certain degree possible. A particular change of consciousness and self-consciousness depends on the depth of the hypnotic process and on the nature of the suggestion of the hypnotist and their qualitative realization.

...

Experimental Plan

To avoid the criticism that regression to later ages of childhood may revive memories or may result in play-acting based on the knowledge of age-specific behavior in other children, it was decided to use regression to early infancy in order to test for the authenticity of the regression. That this might be possible, and might yield useful results, was suggested by the earlier experiments of Gidro-Frank and Bowersbuch (1948) on the appearance of a reflex resembling the Babinski reflex and of True and Stephenson (1951) on plantar reflexes.

Procedure

The subjects were 10 healthy students, ages 19 to 29 years, six males and four females. They show no pathology in neurological, psychic or somatic processes. All had demonstrated their capacity to achieve the deepest level of hypnosis, the third level [i.e. complete and spontaneous amnesia during the entire period of the hypnotic session, and an adequate form of behavior corresponding to the age suggested in hypnosis. Within the suggested situation the subject can actively engage in conversation with someone present in the regressed scene, without attending to suggestions from the hypnotist.]

...The state of early infancy was suggested and a neurological investigation was carried out at the same time [see Results].

Results

[Seven infant reflexes were studied. Below are the total # of each type seen among the 10 subjects:]
-Babinski reflex (fan-like dispersion of toes) - 5
-uncoordinated movements of the eyes - 10
-sucking reflex - 10
-grasping reflex - 4
-"infant's cry" without tears - 5
-"infant's" movements of extremities - 4
-bending reflex of the foot - 6

...none of the subjects responded to the question about age, and none opened the eyes on the command do so while hypnotically regressed... No subjects showed fewer than two of the seven symptoms, and one showed all of them.

Before hypnosis and after the hypnotic regression was reversed, none of the subjects showed responses of the kind listed [above].

Thus, we observed a series of symptoms bearing a definite resemblance to those described in the literature as characteristic of new-born babies.

The subject in the state of new-born did not react to the command of the hypnotist to open the eyes or to lie still, he did not say his name, he could not give eyes fixation on a bright object close to his eyes. In other words, "the unconscious infancy state" was reproduced. The hypnotist's command "You are an adult" was required to make the subject come out of this state. A total unsuggested amnesia was observed after the hypnotic session.

[Editor's note: In an "unconscious infancy state" characterized by failure to respond to commands (like the command to say one's name), it seems to me a subject should not be able to respond to the command "You are an adult."]

It is necessary to note that not all the subjects and not every hypnotic session showed the full set of symptoms. The state was not stable. A number of symptoms occurred for a short period. The period was sufficient, however, for recording of the "infant's cry" as well as for photographing the described states. Some cases gave sufficiently stable symptoms.

Conclusions

I. The reproduction under hypnosis of the components of infancy and early childhood is in a certain degree possible.
II. The suggestion of age regression in adult subjects of the deepest level of somnambulism is not acting but a reproduction of suggested states under a sufficiently deep change in the consciousness of the hypnotized.
III. We can assume a particular change of consciousness and self-consciousness which depends, on the one hand, on the depth of the hypnotic process achieved in the given subject and, on the other hand, on the nature of the suggestions of the hypnotist and their qualitative realization. The change takes place in the deepest variant of the somnambulistic state of hypnosis.
IV. The reproduction of the unconscious state of infancy under hypnosis in adult subjects to a certain extent objectifies the hypnotic state as such, and emphasizes its significance for psychological investigations and psychotherapy.

4. Hypnotic age regression to the neonatal period: comparisons with role playing.
V.L. Raikov
Int J Clin Exp Hypn 1982 Apr;30(2):108-16

The present study explored differences in behavior and reflexes following instructions to age regress to infancy or to portray infancy while high hypnotizable Ss were in an actor's role. Additional role enactment controls were provided by professional actors and low hypnotizable Ss. High hypnotizable Ss while hypnotized reproduced realistic newborn reactions, both behavior and reflexes, which were strikingly like newborn infants during actual age regression, but were unable to produce as many during role enactment. Similarly, the low hypnotizable Ss and professional actors were unconvincing. Negating the theory of age ablation, results are discussed in the light of reactivation of lost memories through the breaking of amnesic barriers during hypnotic age regression.

5. Preliminary observations on age regression in multiple personality disorder patients before and after integration.
RP Kluft
Am J Clin Hypn 1986 Jan;28(3):147-56

A review of research data serendipitously revealed that 12 individuals treated successfully for multiple personality disorder (MPD) had undergone age regression procedures both before integration and after 27 months or more of apparently continuous integration. Subjective experiences and reports of historical events during these procedures often differed in the divided and integrated states. Age regression in firmly integrated patients did not retrieve the separate experiences of separate selves. it appears that a restructuralization of certain aspects of memory and self-representation may occur during the successful treatment of MPD. Analogous phenomena may occur in connection with non-therapeutic challenges to such patients; dissociative barriers and defenses, such as those encountered by an individual who suffers MPD and experiences successive interviews and assessments in a forensic context.

...

from the article

The memories retrieved in this study argue against a view that age regression recovers pristine data. Furthermore, repeated inquiries over time revealed a process of activity restructuring the recollections, and yielded divergent and sometimes contradictory accounts...

6. An investigation of the role of 'hypnosis', hypnotic susceptibility, and hypnotic induction in the production of age regression.
BJ Fellows, M Creamer
Br J Soc Clin Psychol 1978 Jun;17(2):165-71

In response to criticisms of the methodology of Barber's (1969) experiments, a 2x2 factorial design, varying hypnotic susceptibility and hypnotic treatment, was used to study the role of 'hypnosis' in the production of age regression by suggestion. Twenty subjects of high hypnotic susceptibility and 20 subjects of low hypnotic susceptibility were randomly allocated to one of two treatment conditions:hypnotic induction procedure or motivational instructions. Both treatments were followed by suggestions to regress to the age of seven years. Two measures of age regression were taken: the Draw-A-Man-Test and a subjective rating of the reality of the xperience. The results showed significant effects of both variables, with high suceptibility and induction treatment producing better regression on both measures than low susceptibility and motivation treatment. Hypnotic susceptibility was the stronger of the two variables. The ranking of the four conditions corresponded with predictions of hypnotic depth from the state theory of hypnosis, but the findings were not inconsistent with the non-state theory. The drawings of all regressed groups were more mature than the norms for the age of seven and the drawings of a group of seven year old children.

7. Hypnotic age regression: An empirical and methodological analysis
DN O'Connell, RE Shor, MT Orne
J Abnormal Psychology, 76(3 Part 2), December 1970, 1-32

A repetition was made, with additional control groups, of the study of Reiff and Scheerer of hypermnesia through reinstatement of prior cognitive modes of functioning during hypnotic age regression to ages 10, 7, and 4. Only partial replication of the original findings was obtained. Tests amenable to the influence of E expectation and demand characteristics showed the least replication. Tests resistant to such influences replicated well. No evidence of hypermnesia was found. Comparisons with other control (or quasi-control) groups showed: (a) equal performance of cryptosimulating Ss in the absence of hypnosis; (b) evidence for confounding in the original study of treatment and design effects; (c) moderate effect of presence or absence of role support in a quasi-participant group; and (d) fairly good behavioral validity in direct comparisons with children. Evidence for transcendence during hypnosis of waking role-playing behavior was lacking, although striking subjective alterations were present in hypnosis. Methodological implications of these findings are stressed.

8. Hypnotic Age Regression in an Experimental and Clinical Context
Philip Spinhoven and Jorrit van Wijk
Am J Clin Hypnosis, Vol. 35, No. 1, July 1992, p.40-45

The aim of the present study was to investigate the role of a clinical context in the experience of hypnotic age regression. Twenty-five patients experienced hypnotic age regression in an experimental and clinical context in counterbalanced order. Patients obtained significantly lower scores for experimental age regression than for clinical age regression, in particular when the experimental assessment preceded the clinical assessment of age regression. Moreover, scores for clinical and experimental age regression were only significantly and positively correlated when the clinical assessment of age regression preceded the experimental assessment. These findings give a tentative indication that more patients are able to experience clinical age regression than can be predicted from their responses to an experimental suggestion for hypnotic age regression where almost no opportunities for patient contact or maximizing of hypnotic responsiveness are provided.

Our review of recent abstracts returns in the next issue.

Experiencers' Section

"How Are Experiencers' Needs Being Met?" - The Dialogue Continues

by Georgia Flamburis

Georgia Flamburis's essay "How Are Experiencers' Needs Being Met?" appeared in Vol. 4, No. 5. The subsequent issue featured comments by Richard Boylan. Ms. Flamburis responds to those comments below:

I would like to thank Dr. Boylan for responding to my article, "How Are Experiencers' Needs Being Met."

As a layperson, I found many of Dr. Boylan's comments on ways to responsibly and ethically treat experiencers (during investigation, research, hypnosis, and support groups) appropriate, but some statements seemed inconsistent with proper treatment. I would like to briefly comment on those statements:

1. Dr. Boylan stated that receiving an individual message from a visitor from another star system is a powerful experience, especially when directly placed into one's mind, and that it would be best for an experiencer to share messages/visions with an experienced resource person and wait for clarification, I assume that this is Dr. Boylan's personal interpretation of what the experiences mean. As an experiencer I understand how compelling an interpretation of anomalous information can be. Nevertheless, I have concern for non-biased investigation and non-biased therapeutic support. Is it in the best interest of the subject to have unproven theories suggested to them by researchers/investigators/clinicians? It seems to me that sharing <u>all</u> theories would help to broaden the subjects' understanding of the phenomena and allow them the opportunity to interpret for themselves what the experiences mean. I would think that personal theories should be reported separately and not suggested while conducting research, investigations, or clinical support.

2. Dr. Boylan refers to government intelligence networks covering up the presence of ETs by sowing CE-IV stories which contain combinations of truth, lies, distortions, absurdities and/or discrediting allegations and planting pseudo-experiencers within the CE-IV community. This may be true but I feel it may be counterproductive to assume all disinformation is government-designed. Some persons may purposely report false, information for their own personal interests and monetary gain. Some may report true information but may unknowingly also report misinterpretations of it. Disinformation and misinformation can negatively influence persons not properly informed and may negatively effect reputable research. This problem should continue to be addressed and appropriately communicated.

3. I feel comfortable with Dr. Boylan's statement that leadership within a support group should come from someone with special qualifications and resources, such as specially trained mental health professionals or group leaders. I am not sure I feel comfortable, however, when Dr. Boylan goes on to state that appropriate goals of a support group depend on what stage a group is in, or that once persons assimilate and comprehend the ET contacts, they may evolve other goals and agendas (such as reaching out to the public with ET messages or developing media or political influence campaigns about their presences). I cannot deny having done some of this outreach myself, and can assure you I'm very uncertain it was the right thing to do. Contact experiences are far from fully understood and it seems presumptuous and maybe even clinically questionable to encourage support group members in accepting and disseminating hypotheses so quickly or risking becoming obsessive.

It is the individual's right to participate in media interviews. Though willingness to be interviewed publicly may be well meant, as mine was, often the media exploits and sensationalizes the information and can embarrass the person reporting it, Some experiencers may not be prepared for this and should carefully consider not only how comfortable they feel with sharing this type of information publicly but also if it is in their best interest (as I'm sure many investigators must do before they promote their theories and information publicly).

I would like to thank Dr. Boylan for sharing his considerable wealth of professional and personal information with us both in his own publications and by taking the time to answer my queries. We are moving towards a more sophisticated phase of processing the close encounter experiences, as Dr. Boylan so eloquently stated.

Sally's Story

Sally is a 60 year old woman whom I had been seeing in counselling regarding a lifelong history of anomalous experiences. While she does not report abduction experiences, she has seen unusual lights, objects and apparitions, and recalls numerous precognitive and telepathic experiences that are not easily dismissed as misperceptions or wishful thinking . In our sessions together, we have explored the difficulty of knowing with certainty the origin, nature and meaning of her experiences. The desire for such certainty is a constant and powerful theme with many experiencer clients, and is no less strong in Sally.

I have asked Sally to relate a recent incident in her life which will be of interest to BAE readers. She hopes that other people will gain some courage from her story.

I phoned this psychic healer in a small town in Nebraska. I was very eager to speak to this "Edgar Cayce" type healer I had heard about from Lisa — a friend of a friend.

She told me that she calls him frequently about all her medical problems — including cosmetic ones. Lisa

continued to tell me about how he had helped her each and every time. She had great confidence in him and was completely satisfied with his "amazing powers." When she last phoned him from Toronto he "healed" her as they spoke. Lisa also said that he had resculpted her figure to a more youthful and slimmer one and could at will turn everything in her apartment purple (all this was done over the phone, they have never met).

She did warn me that his personality was a little strange, but to be overlooked because he was a great and special person.

My friend and I were captivated by what Lisa was telling us and we both decided to telephone him the following evening.

When I called he wasted no time in bombarding me with data about my physical health which he threw at me like darts and without compassion and then continued in the same manner to tell me that I've been abducted by aliens many times and just recently they had me in a field somewhere. He told me the aliens had been using me as an "experimental animal," and my chronic neck pain was because the aliens had been taking samples from that site. He told me that my entire family going back to my grandparents were also involved. He said he could erase my location from their "computer" so they could no longer find me. *[Sally told me this man said he had worked for NASA and that foreign powers were interested in his services and trying to persuade him to move abroad so that he could work for them]*

At this point I thanked him for his help and asked if and how I could help him. He said I could send a cheque to his ____ Foundation. When I questioned him about this foundation, he replied that it didn't matter what he did with the money — he could spend it on bird-feed if he wished. I thanked him again, said good-bye, and hung up.

It wasn't until I hung up the phone that I started to feel very upset and frightened, and as the evening wore on I became more and more upset and panic set in. I did not sleep that night. I phoned Dr. Gotlib the next day and asked for an immediate if not sooner appointment.

It is now months later and I hardly ever think about it now but when I do I still feel uncomfortable.
I must add that my friend also telephoned him the same evening. Her reaction to him was quite opposite to mine and she said she would phone him again.

Postscript:
Sally has a history of Major Depressive Disorder. When I saw her, the day after her conversation with the psychic, it was apparent that the stress of the telephone call had precipitated a depressive relapse. Fortunately, the relapse resolved within a few days. The "psychic" did not perceive either her history of depression, or how Sally would react to his message.

Anomalous Experiences and an Anomalous Skin Lesion

by Edward Carlos, Ph.D.

Dr. Carlos is a practising artist and a professor of fine arts at a university. He has a B.S. in Art Ed (psych minor), M.F.A. in painting and sculpture (psych minor) and Ph.d. in Comparative Arts (psych minor).

I am or have been an 'encontrant' but did not realize quite what was happening to me until three years ago. My life has been full of interesting 'images' and 'visions' and since I am an artist I just assumed these visionary escapades were 'ordinary' and not mean much. My regular doctor once wrote an article about the 'curing' of cancer (balanitis) stemming from my 'fantasy' about a reincarnative memory (which is associated with the island mentioned in the next paragraph); he would not give me a copy to read, however. I'm not so sure what these 'images' might mean or otherwise imply — they were never 'fantasies' to me, so I read and explore and write about imagery, perception and consciousness almost daily trying to understand the creative processes (at least) better).

When traveling in the Inner Hebrides Islands a 'light fall' dropped out of the cloudy sky onto a bay of water, with thousands of 'electric' sparks dashing over the water and a pink-peach colored circle from which mist arose. I took a photograph of the 'event' thinking I had perhaps really fantasized for the first time in my life. I had two bouts of amnesia (that day) which persisted for months before recall. I lost around three hours before I took the photograph resulting in my wandering around in a daze beneath a brilliant white light. I lost another few hours, three or four, after I took the photograph (and then two more photographs after dark) and before returning to my B/B and sleep; the entire episode lasted from around 1:00 pm until well after darkness — at least six or seven hours. I remembered nothing until the photographs came back four months later.

Since then, over 30 hours of hypnosis with two psychiatrists, one a researcher, assisted my attempt to remember lost hours or other anomalous experiences of the encounter kind. Although my story is not unlike so many others, there are some differences in imagery, attitude maybe, and theoretical interpretations especially, I think. I have learned to face my fears or anxieties and put fear and anger aside; consequently, I see the phenomena associated with these experiences as aspects of a spiritual-psychic developing. Any personal anxieties I carry mainly concern the effects of this on my children, and their own when they will be conceived and born. I was glad I went beyond the initial horrifying first hours of hypnotic regression and have always held back on my 'judgment' about what it is and its meaning.

Our three children, now adults, have had similar imagic experiences, awareness, or questions arising from dreams mostly. One son has had one hour of hypnotic regression regarding an incident remembered from when he was a child.

This is the issue I am concerned with:

Our daughter, however, last December '92, or very early in January '93, was taking a morning shower when she called out that 'part of me is missing' and showed me a quite large scoop mark in her hip; it was pink whereas her skin pigmentation is much lighter, almost Geisha white.

I recognized the mark from journal photographs only this mark was much larger than any photograph I had seen. We talked a bit about it. Finally, she agreed to go to a doctor to have it checked. There was (then) no obvious pain or any itch of any significance. She went to a local doctor then in May, 1993, agreeing to this since she was marrying during the summer months. The doctor, a general practitioner, had "never seen anything like that" and asked if it hurt, itched, and had she had a blow to the area. The doctor concluded she had no idea what it could be from. The doctor knew of my concerns about encounters since I had been to her husband (they form a clinic) around the same time with my story of lost time and agreed to an MRI and a head X-ray which I had done (no epilepsy; nothing else shown). The doctors "of course" have no belief in the supposition of UFOs; they do not ridicule however and are supportive and kind in their disposition (This is not always the case, in my own experience with others in the medical profession).

Once wed, our daughter and son-in-law moved to Amherst late summer, '93; she went to an internist at the University of Massachusetts in late October or early November; the internist basically asked the same questions and suggested it might be from fat atrophy, mentioning 'lupus atrophy' and he tested for diabetes, giving her blood and urine tests but all tests were negative, i.e., nothing was wrong. These records are all on file at the university medical clinic.

The internist recommended a dermatologist, and in December, my daughter went to a Dartmouth dermatologist who asked the same questions and who had a biopsy administered because he did not know what it was. There was nothing on the biopsy showing any abnormality, expressed in a long paragraph. The doctor explained that the longer the paragraph usually the less they knew about it, because if they knew what it was, they would state or name it. They suggested taking a deeper biopsy, but the dermatologist thought it was unnecessary to do so. Our daughter asked if he had ever heard of this 'condition' being associated with UFOs but he treated the issue, politely, like a joke and dismissed the possibility. "A kooky idea that somehow got in your head."

Our daughter next went to Dartmouth, again, as further recommended by the dermatologist in Jan. '94 to the Center that did the biopsy. This time the doctor said she had morphea or localized scleroderma distinguishing it from scleroderma. He said medical experts do not know why people get morphea but that it does not cause any problem except cosmetically, and that there is no known treatment. He told her there was no need to worry since it causes no difficulty. Our daughter asked him about UFOs; he treated the issue more seriously than the others but had not heard of this as related although he had heard of 'abductions.' But, he called five doctors who were on the floor (interns, perhaps) to see if they had any ideas, one of whom expressed concern about any hardness around the area (it was soft). Other than that they were stumped.

In addition, our daughter tells me it sometimes 'seems smaller' when she touches it, and sometimes the red color in its interior is brighter like when one gets out of a hot shower. The final doctor in this journey said variations in redness would be normal changes as from temperature, scratching, etc. However, the sciatic nerve 'acts up' especially; when she is stressed, on her left side where the scoop mark is located and a pain does [radiate] down her left leg from it. She has found that yoga meditation helps a bit with both the pain and stress.

One thing she did not share with the doctors (I think) was that for awhile, during the summer months, the coloring turned a blue and then a deep purple (almost black); the discoloration frightened me, and when I discovered it at a swimming pool I urged her once she was back from the honeymoon to return to the doctor and to see about the change in color. Since then it has become pink again. She cannot see this well herself since it is on her hip and on the underneath part of the bulk of the hip a bit toward the back.

Another thing, and this is, of course, a spurious and perhaps unrelated anecdote (but interesting nonetheless, I think): During that spring (1993), she had a dream about small people; on the same night her beau had a dream that alien creatures were coming through the wall and took him and his fiancee with them. He awakened with a bleeding nose.

Thank you for any other information regarding this topic. I find your journal contributing in a way nothing else is out there in publishing-land, and I applaud you for your efforts.

Dr. Carlos is seeking information and related experiences regarding scoop-marks, morphea, and similar skin problems. He may be reached at 172 Tennessee Avenue, Sewanee TN 37375.

We want, perhaps need to talk and think about God. In this we must be ultimately frustrated since the divine exceeds all approaches to it. Kant said that the ultimate mystery of being is not a thing, and so the best things cannot be discussed since they transcend thought. The second best things are misunderstood since they are the thoughts that refer to that which is beyond thought. The third best are what we actually do discuss and ponder.

Peter Rojcewicz, Religion And Discrimination: A Meditation